NEWS / A15

UK no longer hiring foreign nurses to accommodate its own 'homegrown' graduates

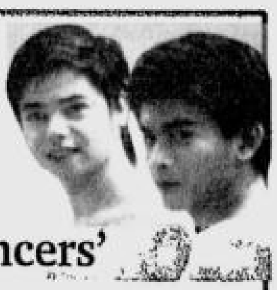
ACROSS / A13

War on Reds' focus: Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Tarlac

BUSINESS / B1

Ombudsman finds enough basis to probe Masinloc mess

ENTERTAINMENT / A2-2



Oh, those gorgeous young men in skimpy outfits as 'Twilight Dancers'

GMA gets 70% grade from Congress group

By Christine O. Avendaño

THE ARROYO ADMINISTRATION scored 70 percent—but that's "not necessarily" a failing grade.

That cheerful statement was made yesterday by

GMA GETS/ A15

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Thursday, July 20, 2006 ★★ 5 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 222 P18 website: www.inq7.net

'Gringo' tops controversial nursing board examination

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

MANGALDAN, PANGASINAN—IT WAS THE longest month for Gringo de Guzman San Diego, 20, as he waited anxiously for the results of the controversial nursing board examinations given this year.

San Diego was worried, not that he was un-

'GRINGO'/ A15

Bolante a test case for US

Under 'No Safe Haven' program, visa of suspected grafter is revoked

By Nimfa U. Rueda, *Contributor*

LOS ANGELES—THE CASE OF JOCELYN "JOC-JOC" Bolante could test the strength of a US program that punishes foreigners suspected of corruption by taking away their privilege to travel to the United States.

Under the program called "No Safe Haven," the visa of a foreign government official—whether past or incumbent—may be revoked if there is reason to believe that the person is corrupt even if he/she has neither been convicted in the country of origin nor engaged in an illegal act in the United States. *(More details on Page A4.)*

With the US government still to announce why Bolante's B1/B2 visa was revoked, the former agriculture undersecretary's continued detention—now on its 12th day and with no records showing that he is under deportation proceedings—leads immigration experts to believe it is no ordinary case.

"It seems irregular. His visa might not have been revoked following the normal process," said Carl Shusterman, a top im-

BOLANTE/ A4

RP plea: Please allow Filipinos to hitch ride

By Volt Contreras

WHAT THE GOVERNMENT LACKED IN ships and aircraft, it tried to make up in letters to foreign countries pleading with them to let Filipinos hitch a ride in their evacuation vessels out of war-battered Lebanon.

The Department of Foreign Affairs sent a barrage of notes verbales to various embassies—the United States, the United Kingdom, France and Italy—that were rushing to pull out their citizens from bombed-out Beirut.

"The problem is, we don't have ships where our nationals can board, unlike the US and French," DFA spokesperson Gilberto Asuque said. "We have very limited resources."

Also yesterday, the DFA announced a repatriation plan, called "Oplan Sagip OFW sa Lebanon," as Israeli warplanes continued to pound Hezbollah bases there. *(Story on this page.)*

Malacañang said that a first batch of 200 "mostly distressed" overseas Filipino workers was to move out by bus today for the 90-km trip from Beirut to Damascus in Syria. There, they would be airlifted on Friday to Dubai and Manila by a chartered Kurdistan Airlines flight.

The 200 had sought refuge at the Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal parish in Beirut's Christian district of Sassine. Another 900 Filipinos have registered to be moved out once an alert level 4 requiring a mandatory evacuation is declared.

The alert remained at level 3 yesterday, meaning Filipinos should leave their homes for relocation sites.

Maribeth Sayson, 36, a native of Argao town in Cebu, sent a text message to her relatives from Beirut on Sunday saying: "What's the latest news? We are OK here with God's mercy. As of now, we have not heard any firing but we are not yet safe because we don't know when the war will end."

Sayson's mother, Rosita, said her daughter was inquiring about government efforts to help the OFWs.

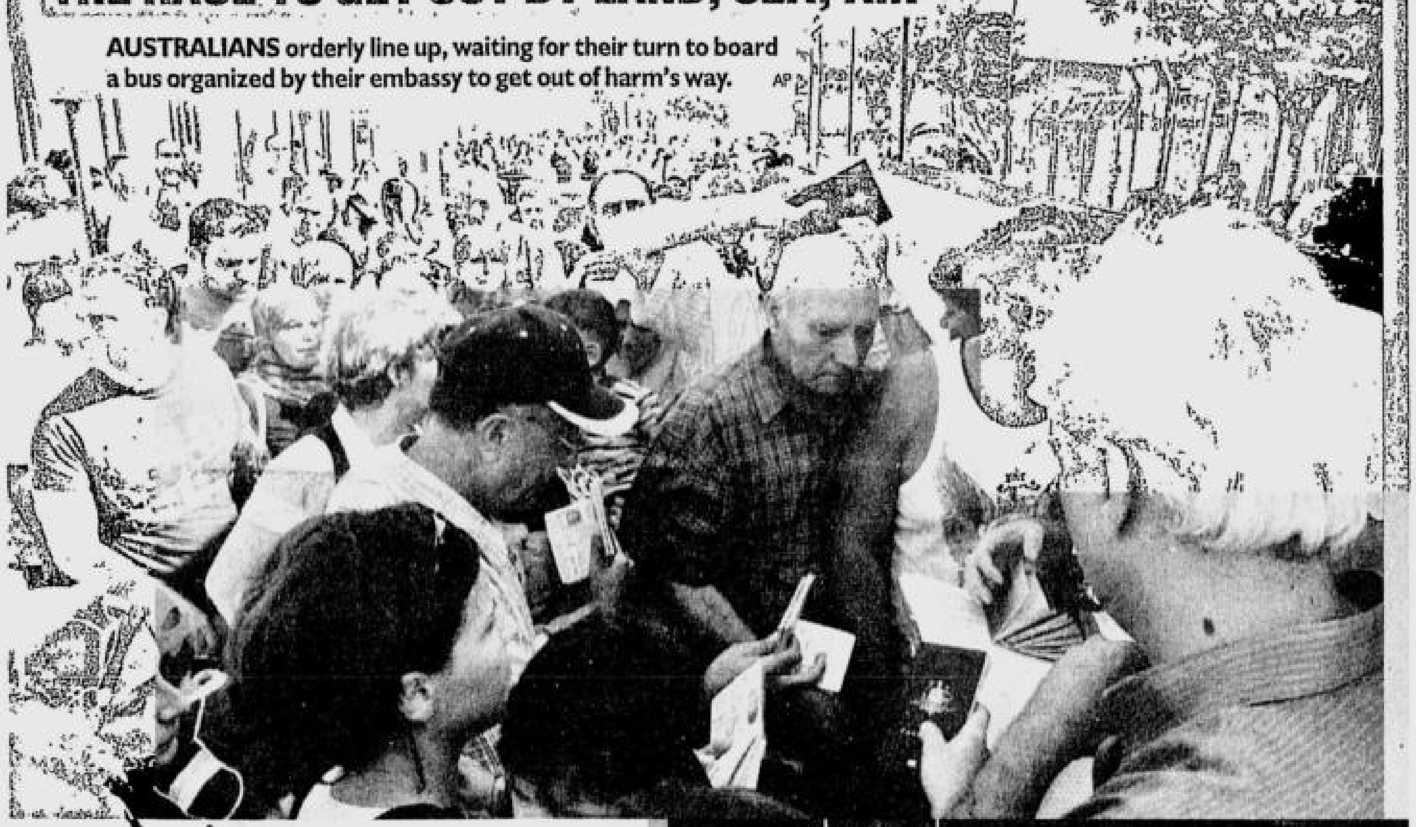
Another OFW worker told a relative, Margarita Luardo, also in Argao, in an SMS message to "Please pray for me. We are safe here but I don't know what's the latest news because we are still in the mountains."

Foreign Undersecretary Esteban Cornejo, speaking to reporters after a meeting with President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday on efforts to help Filipinos in Lebanon, said that "she's not going to count the cost for any OFW. *Walang iwanan dito* (No one will be left behind). Every life is sacred."

The DFA said that it had requested, through its Office of European Affairs, the embassies of France, United Kingdom and Italy "for their assistance in accommodating overseas Filipino workers

RP PLEA/ A6

THE RACE TO GET OUT BY LAND, SEA, AIR



AUSTRALIANS orderly line up, waiting for their turn to board a bus organized by their embassy to get out of harm's way. AP

masafi
masa

AMERICANS are evacuated by chopper to Cyprus starting Tuesday. US Marines carry boxes of water supplies for the passengers. AFP

LEBANESE-SWEDISH nationals arrive safely in Turkey's Mediterranean coastal city of Mersin on Wednesday via a Turkish ship. Turkey is one of the five transit points from where evacuees can fly home. AFP

BRITS AND OTHER EUROPEANS dock in the Cyprus port of Limassol aboard a British ship. Three ships carrying about 1,500 evacuees are the latest wave in the foreign exodus from war-battered Lebanon. AFP

8th day: Israel unleashes more air strikes, sends ground troops

BEIRUT, LEBANON—ISRAEL ON Wednesday unleashed more air strikes on Lebanon and launched ground attacks on Hezbollah guerrilla positions across the border, killing 41 civilians and destroying 20 homes and buildings.

Hezbollah guerrillas retaliated by firing at least eight more rockets on Haifa, hitting a building in Israel's third-largest city. No injuries were reported.

Despite international diplomatic efforts, there was no sign that Israel or its Lebanese Shiite Muslim foes were ready to heed the Beirut government's pleas for an immediate halt to the 8-day-old fighting that has cost 277 lives in Lebanon and 25 in Israel.

The conflict has forced about 100,000 Lebanese to flee their homes. Panicked foreigners have flooded out of the country. *(See story in The World, Page A20.)*

The New York Times, however, reported an American-Israeli consensus was emerging on how to resolve the conflict that began on July 12 when Hezbollah guerrillas raided an Israeli border outpost, seized two Israeli soldiers and offered to swap the pair for Lebanese and Palestinians languishing in Israeli jails.

Under the consensus, Israel would continue to bombard Lebanon for at least another week to degrade the capabilities of Hezbollah, which is backed by Syria and Iran. US Secretary of State Condoleezza

8TH DAY/ A6

Two Japanese surprised why 'Nicole' in court

By Volt Contreras

FOR TWO JAPANESE WOMEN ON A HOLiday trip to Manila, attending the Subic rape trial on Tuesday was a welcome detour from their otherwise light itinerary.

After all, they have also been working to help the "Nicoles" of their home country.

Masayo Niwa and Miho Nagahashi followed the four-hour proceedings at the Makati Regional Trial Court with the help of an interpreter, in a show of support for the Filipino woman accusing four US Marines of rape.

In an interview after the hearing, Niwa expressed "surprise" at the way Nicole was being made to watch the proceedings, and was being watched in turn.

In Japan, Niwa said through an interpreter, "we have a tendency to protect the victim from being exposed during sensitive discussions [in court]. We actually have less of such discussions and rely more on documents."

"We don't want to hurt the victim again, who was already raped. She can experience the same hurt when sensitive

TWO JAPANESE/ A15

Gonzalez warns bishop: No one is above the law

By Armand N. Nocum
and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

SAYING NO ONE IS ABOVE THE LAW, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said that Bishop Antonio Tobias could be criminally charged for harboring Magdalo soldiers out to bring down President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Gonzalez told reporters that state lawyers were evaluating a statement given by Tobias in two television interviews on Tuesday that he had given sanctuary in his official residence to Army 1st Lt. Lawrence San Juan along with six other rebel soldiers who had escaped detention.

"I think there is a liability, but I don't want to discuss Tobias for a while. He might stir a hornet's nest," Gonzalez said. "We have a provision on harboring fugitives ... in the Revised Penal Code."

Although he had not yet made any conclusion on the case, Gonzalez said he was concerned that Tobias was "flouting the law."

"Allowing his house to be used for plotting ... Out of these statements, we already get a picture of what he is trying to do," Gonzalez said.

Asked if bishops were above the law, Gonzalez replied, "I don't think anybody is above the law."

San Juan was implicated in the aborted takeover of the Oakwood apartment hotel in Makati City in an attempt to oust Ms Arroyo in July 2003 by soldiers calling themselves Magdalo. He escaped in January but was recaptured a month later.

GONZALEZ/ A4

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon and Western Visayas will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming frequent rains which may trigger flashfloods and landslides over Central and Southern Luzon and Western Visayas. The rest of the country will have cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

COMPILED BY KATE V PEDROSO, PDI RESEARCH/07/19/06 SOURCE PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Partly Cloudy

Lopez report: Once a plotter ...

By Dona Pazzibugan

A NUMBER OF KEY PLAYERS IN THE FEB. 24 FAILED coup plot turned out to have been involved in past coups, a military investigation into the February incident showed.

These officers, after undergoing court-martial, were allowed to resume their military careers and even assume crucial command posts, and then promptly reverted to their rebellious nature, according to a military fact-finding report.

A draft of the report prepared by an eight-man panel led by Rear Admiral Rufino Lopez was leaked to the media.

Like the Davide and Feliciano Commissions that looked into the 1989 and the 2003 failed coups, the Lopez fact-finding board has urged the military brass to apply the full weight of military law on the rebel soldiers.

"Officers and enlisted personnel found involved in any destabilization plan against the government should be removed from the military service. They have no place in the Armed Forces of the Philippines," the Lopez report said.

It said that "those found guilty of the charges brought against them should serve the maximum penalties prescribed prior to (their) discharge" from the military.

It recommended that officers who were involved in past coups d' etat should be "gradually transferred to non-sensitive positions" and "barred from command of units especially elite or special units."

The list of recidivists is led by Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, who was sacked as commander of the Army's elite First Scout Rangers Regiment, for planning to lead troops in a protest march on Feb. 24 and withdraw support from President Macapagal-Arroyo.

As a young captain in 1989, Lim led a group of rebel Scout Rangers that laid siege to the Makati commercial district in December 1989 in what would be the bloodiest coup d' etat against the Aquino administration.

Lim, a 1978 graduate of the US Military Academy in West Point, and other members of the Young Officers Union were detained and tried by court-martial.

Amnesty

In 1995, the rebel soldiers were granted amnesty by the Ramos administration.

Lim was allowed to resume his military career and rose through the ranks to became commandant of the First Scout Rangers.

In April 2005, he was promoted to star-rank status, becoming at 49 the youngest brigadier general in the Armed Forces. He was also the first YOU leader to become a general.

Col. Ariel Querubin, former commander of the 1st Marine Brigade and another key player in the Feb. 24 plot, was also a YOU member.

In 1989, while Lim was laying siege to Makati, Querubin led a Marine rebel attack on the main military headquarters at Camp Aguinaldo.

The 10-day coup left a hundred civilians and soldiers dead and hundreds more injured.

Other officers implicated in the Feb. 24 plot who turned out to have been part of the December 1989 coup are Lt. Col. Nestor Flordeliza, Lt. Col. Edmundo Malabanjot of the FSSR; and Lt. Col. Armando Bañez and Lt. Col. Martin Villasan of the Marines.

Flordeliza and Malabanjot were captains while Bañez and Villasan were first lieutenants in 1989.

As of Feb. 24, Flordeliza was the FSSR chief of staff while Malabanjot, who was also tried by court-martial for his participation in the August 1987 coup d'etat led by then Lt. Col. Gregorio Honasan, was a battalion commander.

In January 2002, Lim and Querubin presented to Ms Arroyo a manifesto signed by 71 former YOU officers, in which they renounced any involvement in future coups.

The 71 signatories, which included Flordeliza and Malabanjot, declared they were "no longer the young officers of yesteryears" and promised Ms Arroyo they will "fight to the death" any coup plotters.

NO COUP PLOTTER. Tonyboy Cojuangco interviewed by media on his visit to Camp Crame.

Tonyboy tells probers he's not a coup backer

By Luige A. del Puerto

BUSINESSMAN ANTONIO COJUANGCO yesterday denied being part of any attempt to bring down the government or of being a financier of coup plots.

Cojuangco, who is chair of the ABC-5 television network, spent 15 minutes yesterday with investigators of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group of the Philippine National Police and the National Bureau of Investigation at Camp Crame.

The businessman was one of those named by Roy Señeres, a former ambassador and anti-Arroyo campaigner, as being among those in the private sector allegedly involved in the Feb. 24 plot to oust Ms Arroyo.

"Are you a financier?" CIDG Director Jesus Versoza asked Cojuangco.

To which Cojuangco replied: "I don't know them [the coup plotters]."

This was how the exchange went between Cojuangco and Versoza, according to Rolando Villonco, one of three lawyers who accompanied the businessmen to Camp Crame.

Villonco said Cojuangco denied even knowing Señeres.

He submitted to investigators an affidavit denying all the allegations against him.

"I have not been, nor am I now, involved, directly or indirectly, in or with any potential or actual groups geared towards toppling the duly constituted authorities. I have not abetted, aided or assisted any alleged attempts at launching a coup d' etat, rebellion or sedition against the government," Cojuangco said in the affidavit.

Lim videotape

"I have not been a 'funder' or supporter of any group purporting to have planned or to have commenced to act to oust, by illegal means, the leaders of the present administration," he said.

Cojuangco also denied that the videotape of Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim declaring his withdrawal of support from the President was taken at the ABC-5 studios or was made using the network's facilities.

Lim, commander of the elite First Scout Ranger Regiment, was dismissed and has been in detention for his alleged role in the Feb. 24 attempted coup.

He said Señeres "merely assumed that I knew this to be a fact but that he has no personal knowledge on my supposed involvement with Lim or his group."

ABC 5 never possessed this videotape, he said.

Another Cojuangco lawyer, Alma Mallonga, said Cojuangco volunteered to be questioned without invitation after reports alleging his links to the coup plot surfaced.

"Mr. Cojuangco does not want to appear that he has anything to hide," she said.

Mallonga said Cojuangco has expressed "private indignation" over reports linking him to the coup plot but has not decided whether he would sue anyone for libel.

She believes Cojuangco's name cropped up because he makes for a "very interesting story."

"As a businessman, he will not support illegal activities that disregard constitutional processes because [he knows] it will only lead to economic difficulties for the entire country," she said.

No dope on Tonyboy

Versoza said no documents or testimony, except for the statements made by Señeres, implicated Cojuangco in the oust-Arroyo plot.

"We will be evaluating their affidavits and declarations," he said, adding that the investigation into the financiers and supporters of the failed coup would continue.

Versoza said investigators expect to get more affidavits from other witnesses. He did not elaborate.

He said they would be inviting more personalities in the coming days but refused to name them.

Those to be invited might include Novaliches Bishop Antonio Tobias who earlier admitted to giving sanctuary to the escaped soldiers of the Magdalo group charged with the July 2003 failed coup and who have also been linked to the February coup attempt.

Versoza said there will be no special treatment for the bishops.

5 million residents of Metro Manila may have no potable water by 2009

Unless MWSS starts bulk water projects now

Water is our most important lifeline. We can live for several weeks without food and without electricity but we cannot survive for more than three days if we had no water to drink. We would become dehydrated, sluggish, dizzy and sick until we eventually die. Without water to clean our bodies, to brush our teeth, to flush the toilet, to wash our clothes and to dispose rotten food leftovers, we would be susceptible to all kinds of diseases.

In just three years from now, in 2009, this scenario could happen to five million residents of Western Quezon City, Southern Caloocan, suburbs of Manila, Valenzuela, Malabon, Navotas, Pasay, Parañaque, Las Piñas and Western Muntinlupa, if the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) does not do something about it today.

The fast-approaching water crisis had been diagnosed as early as 1991 when the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) listed Metro Manila among the "water critical areas" in the country, along with Cebu, Davao, Baguio, Iloilo, Angeles (Pampanga), Cagayan de Oro, Bacolod (Negros Occidental), and Zamboanga. The projections for Metro Manila cited shortages of 150 to 1, 050 million liters a day (MLD) from 2006 to 2012, with 300 to 400 MLD immediately needed by 2007.

In 2004, the MWSS opened the prequalification process for a 300 MLD BOT bulk water supply project to address the impending shortfall. But until now the project is still bogged down at the prequalification stage, with no official results and resolution in sight.

For years, water management experts and Metro Manila residents alike have been urging government officials to construct water projects under the BOT scheme, but our officials always come up with flimsy excuses. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo must act with haste to implement short-term and long-term water supply projects to avert the crisis and the dangers it poses to the affected populace.

We can't afford to waste time any longer. These MWSS water projects require at least three years to construct and make operational. The recurring water shortages now being experienced in different areas of Metro Manila are only small indications of the forthcoming water crisis that will surely bring a multitude of health and industrialization problems.

Experts have warned that an acute water shortage in Metro Manila could induce health, economic, peace and order and political crises such as we have never experienced before. The more the government delays the bulk water projects, the worse the consequences will be for Metro Manila residents.

The quality of life of Metro Manila residents depends on how fast MWSS responds to the impending calamity. To avert the water crisis, PGMA must act NOW.

A message from Concerned Citizens of Metro Manila

HK maids lose appeal to abolish monthly levy

FOREIGN MAIDS IN Hong Kong lost an appeal on Wednesday against a government-imposed monthly levy on their employers which they said was discriminatory and "like a tax" on their income.

"We feel very disappointed of the result today because it has been a long fight for the migrant workers and we expected to win and we have to win," said Eni Lestari Andayani Adi, spokesperson for the Asian Migrants Coordinating Body.

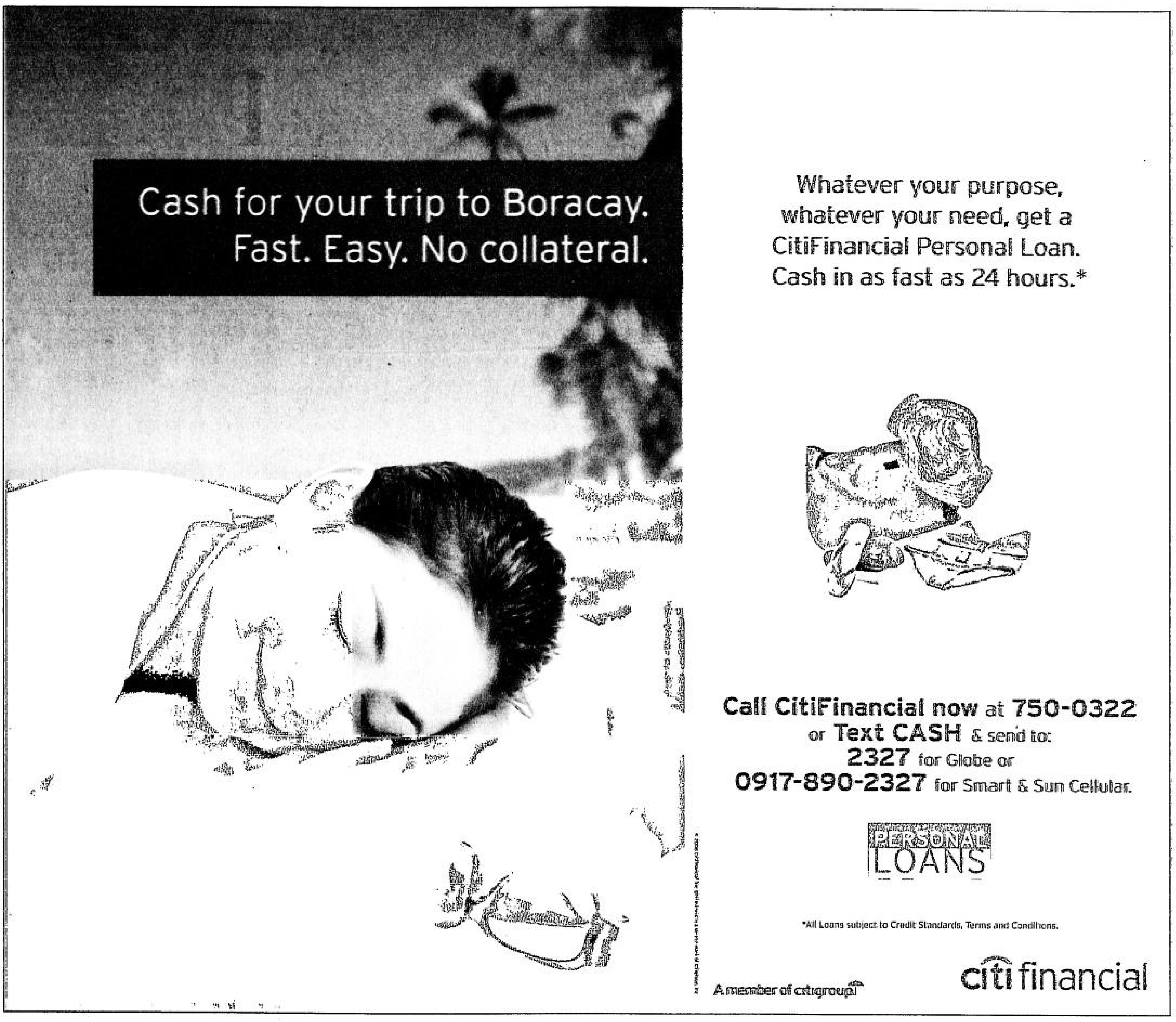
"The levy was actually coming out from our salary, this is like a tax to us. It's very discriminatory and an injustice to us," she added.

Eni Lestari Andayani Adi, one of five foreign maids who in 2003 filed a judicial review of the levy, said they would continue their fight "to the court of final appeal." The judicial review argued the $400 (51-US-dollar) levy imposed on foreign maids' employers was discriminatory, unlawful and had no legislative authority.

The maids—four Filipinas and one Indonesian—also said the levy's introduction led to a 400 dollar cut in their minimum wage.

However, the High Court ruled the levy was lawful and did not require approval from the Legislative Council.

It added there was no link between the levy and the wage cut and that therefore the levy was not discriminatory. *AFP*



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Bolante a test case for US 'No Safe Haven' doctrine

From page A1

migration specialist in Los Angeles who used to work as a lawyer for the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Filipino-American lawyer Roman Mosqueda also thought the case was "quite rare."

Bolante was arrested by US immigration authorities at the Los Angeles International Airport on July 7.

He is believed to have been behind the distribution of P728 million in fertilizer funds to allies of Malacañang, purportedly to ensure President Macapagal-Arroyo's victory in the May 2004 polls.

Proclamation vs corruption

Guidelines in the US Foreign Affairs Manual were apparently not followed in the Bolante case.

Section 41.122 N3 of the manual states: "Under no circumstances should you revoke the visa of an alien believed to be physically in the United States, or to have commenced an uninterrupted journey to the United States."

Section 41.122 N2 requires that before a visa is revoked, the holder should be notified of the intention to do so and given the opportunity to show why it should not be done.

But in cases involving corruption the State Department may take a different route.

Presidential Proclamation No. 7750 authorizes the secretary of state to identify persons who should be denied entry because they are involved in public corruption that has serious adverse effects on US interests, including: the international economic activity of US businesses, US foreign assistance goals, the security of the United States against transnational crime and terrorism, and the stability of democratic nations and institutions.

This proclamation has helped some governments crack down on corrupt officials.

"We support this program," said Nancy Zucker Boswell, managing director of the US chapter of Transparency International, a Berlin-based nonprofit, nonpartisan group that aims to curb corruption in international transactions.

President George W. Bush has also indicated a commitment to help crack down on corrupt government officials.

When he transmitted the UN Convention Against Corruption to the US Senate, he said: "The international fight against corruption is an important foreign policy priority for the United States."

No record of his case

Bolante remains in detention at the San Pedro Detention Center in California, said Lori Haley, a spokesperson for Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Haley had earlier said that Bolante was under removal proceedings and that he was being held on charges of immigration violation.

But as of July 19 (July 20 in the Philippines), there is still no record of Bolante's case at the Department of Justice's Executive Office for Immigration Review, according to Elaine Komis, spokesperson for the EOIR, which manages immigration courts and schedules deportation and asylum hearings.

When pressed for a reason for the delay in the processing of Bolante's papers, Komis directed the INQUIRER to the Homeland Security headquarters in Washington.

A spokesperson for Homeland Security said such a delay was not unusual.

"It's not an overnight process. There are so many arrests that are being made every day," said the spokesperson, who requested anonymity for lack of authority to speak publicly on specific cases.

But Shusterman thought 12 days was too long for a person to remain in detention without the EOIR receiving the case records.

"They shouldn't be keeping [Bolante] this long," he said.

Formal petition

In Manila, both the Philippine government and the US Embassy have invoked privacy concerns in denying media requests for details on Bolante's case.

Frustrated by the silence, former Solicitor General Francisco Chavez said he had asked an American lawyer-friend of his to invoke the US Freedom of Information Act in formally petitioning the US justice department to shed light on the issue.

"He's working on the petition even as we talk. The Act is similar to our constitutional provision on free access to information. It would be enough," said Chavez, who had exposed the P728-million fertilizer fund scam.

He said the US Freedom of Information Act would override the privacy rules governing Bolante's arrest and purported application for political asylum.

According to Chavez, the US government may deny a petition based on the Freedom of Information Act only if the information sought involves matters of US internal security, premature disclosure of government policy, and other issues of national import.

Arrested before indicted

But Chavez downplayed Sen. Panfilo Lacson's claim that the Americans were holding Bolante because US funds were also misused in the fertilizer fund scam.

"If you look at the history of US loans to the Philippines, [you will see that] the US government had never held any public official because of the use of such aid," he said. "That procedure cannot be found in the US justice system."

Chavez said that if the Americans intended to indict Bolante for alleged misuse of financial aid, they should have done so before he was arrested.

"Indictments come before a person suspected of committing a crime is arrested. But in this case, Bolante was detained even before the supposed indictment," he said.

Chavez reiterated that Bolante's detention was the result of "collusion between his friends in the Palace and some friends in the US government."

"He may have voluntarily surrendered in that detention center and then applied for asylum, knowing that it could take three to five years to resolve his application," Chavez said. "He is effectively beyond the reach of Philippine compulsory processes."

Public interest vs privacy

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. demanded that the government speak up in order to put a stop to "conflicting and confusing" reports on Bolante.

Pimentel expressed dismay at the Department of Foreign Affairs' statement that it could not reveal the details of Bolante's arrest and detention in deference to his family's request for privacy.

The senator said public interest outweighed privacy concerns in the case because Bolante was being investigated by the Senate and the Office of the Ombudsman for the alleged misuse of more than P1 billion in fertilizer funds.

"When anyone gets his dirty hands on public funds intended for [Filipino] farmers, that is not a private matter," Pimentel said, adding:

"Bolante cannot invoke his right to privacy here. Public interest demands that everything regarding the whereabouts of Bolante and the reasons why he is being detained in a criminal holding facility should be made public."

Pimentel said it was the government's responsibility to keep tabs on Bolante's case and "to provide the public accurate and factual information on the situation."

Cover-up?

"Otherwise, the temptation to believe that a cover-up is being made to shield Bolante, who is wanted in the country, particularly by the Senate, is hard to resist," he said.

The Senate issued last year a warrant of arrest on Bolante for his repeated snub of the chamber's inquiry into the fertilizer fund scam. *With reports from Philip C. Tubeza in Manila*

Palace antigraft body report on fertilizer scam fails to meet deadline

THE PRESIDENTIAL ANTI-GRAFT Commission (PAGC) has admitted to the Senate that its inquiry into the fertilizer fund scam was now nearly two months delayed with its failure to meet its self-imposed 90-day deadline last May.

PAGC chair Constancia de Guzman wrote Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. that her commission's inquiry into the fund mess had been delayed because of the failure of other agencies to immediately submit relevant papers.

COA documents not in

"Delayed submission of subpoenaed documents (some of which, particularly the Commission on Audit's local government audit reports, are not yet received by the PAGC) prevented the PAGC from meeting the 90-day timeframe. Hence, to date our investigative processes are still ongoing," De Guzman said.

"Considering that the local government audit reports (which we deemed crucial in the investigation process) are not yet in PAGC's possession, no conclusion can be given at the moment," she said.

De Guzman said the commission had given itself 90 days—from March 2 to May 31—to complete its inquiry and submit its recommendation to the Office of the President.

She said the PAGC had issued subpoenas to the budget and agriculture departments and the Commission on Audit but that these agencies had not turned over all the requested documents. *Philip C. Tubeza*

IN THE KNOW

They can run but they can't hide

UNDER THE "No Safe Haven Doctrine," persons who have committed a crime can very well flee to another country. But while they can run, they cannot hide; wherever they are hiding, they can still be brought to justice.

This is an application of "universal jurisdiction"—a principle in international law stating that certain crimes are so egregious that they constitute crimes against humanity and can therefore be prosecuted in any court in the world.

Universal jurisdiction has been incorporated into a number of treaties seeking to ensure that there is no "safe haven" for those responsible for the most serious crimes.

The principle has a long history and has been traced to the Code of Justinian in the sixth century.

Crimes covered

Among the first crimes recognized by international law as covered by universal jurisdiction were brigandage, war crimes, piracy and the slave trade.

The present-day list includes genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, torture, extrajudicial execution and "disappearances."

Since World War II, more than 12 countries have conducted investigations, started prosecutions and completed trials based on universal jurisdiction for these crimes, or arrested persons with a view to extraditing them to a state that will prosecute.

Among these countries are Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Israel, Mexico, the Netherlands, Senegal, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States.

According to a report by Amnesty International, over 125 states have laws providing for universal jurisdiction. A number covers ordinary crimes under national law such as murder, abduction, assault and rape.

Pinochet, Cavallo

Recent cases involved former dictator Augusto Pinochet and Ricardo Miguel Cavallo.

Pinochet was arrested in London in 1998 based on an arrest order by Spain. Victims of his alleged crimes sought justice in Spain because amnesty laws did not allow his prosecution in Chile.

Cavallo, who was accused of crimes committed during Argentina's "dirty war," was extradited to Spain after his arrest in his hiding place in Mexico. *PDI Research*

Is it a crime? CBCP rallies round Novaliches prelate

By Christian V. Esguerra

IT MAY BE A CRIME IN THE EYES of President Macapagal-Arroyo but is it in the eyes of God?

Senior leaders of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) yesterday came to the defense of Bishop Antonio Tobias who had admitted harboring a fugitive rebel officer.

Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, the CBCP president, said he respected the "personal decision" of the Novaliches prelate to provide sanctuary to 1st Lt. Lawrence San Juan, who escaped in January and was recaptured a month later.

Caloocan Bishop Deogracias Iñiguez said he would have done the same had San Juan and other Magdalo soldiers come to him.

"If they had run to me, I would have cared for them too—that's what any Christian should do," he told the INQUIRER.

The outspoken Tobias has been avoiding reporters since admitting in a television interview that he had helped San Juan, formerly a key leader of the Magdalo group who later jumped back to the Arroyo administration.

Tobias was further placed on the defensive after two former "jueteng" witnesses accused him and five other bishops of involvement in a supposedly failed coup against Ms Arroyo, who has been accused of rigging the 2004 election, a charge she has denied but would not go away.

Six bishops in coup plot?

Richard Garcia and Demosthenes "Abe" Riva identified the five others as Archbishop Oscar Cruz, Bishops Teodoro Bacani and Julio Xavier Labayen, Iñiguez, and Lagdameo.

Lagdameo and Cruz yesterday categorically denied the allegations.

The CBCP president said he and his peers were saddened that "stories related to the report of overthrowing of government are being fabricated without proof as to their veracity."

"I appeal that the sources of such stories will clarify themselves for the sake of the common good. I invite them to prove their statements involving us, six bishops," he said in a statement.

Lagdameo felt the accusation was connected to their previous comments on political and social issues.

"Contrary to allegations, the six bishops in the news report did not have any meeting together with any group, including any member of the Magdalo group, in order to bring down the administration unconstitutionally and in a violent manner," he said.

"It is very possible that an accusation is being leveled against the credibility of the bishops because of our stand on issues, which are not pleasant to certain groups. As bishops we always promote peaceful, non-violent and constitutional means of reform in government."

For common good

Lagdameo explained that the positions the bishops had taken were simply "for the interest of the common welfare."

"Because people look at issues from different perspectives and with different values, we bishops accept that our statements—individually or corporately—may not be agreeable to everybody."

Cruz described as "wild" the allegations floated on Tuesday by Garcia and Riva. The two accusers earlier came to the Lingayen-Dagupan prelate and volunteered to spill the beans on big-time jueteng operators and financiers.

After delivering emotional testimonies before the Senate, the two abandoned Cruz, head of the Krusadang Bayan Laban sa Jueteng, and later joined the administration's fold.

"Now is witch-hunting time for the present administration that is nervous of losing its grip on power and might, and, all of a sudden, exactly the same pair went public again. Only this time their allegations are rather too convenient and timely and preposterous as well," he said in a statement.

'Wild allegations'

"For the moment, it is enough to deny their rather wild allegations attaching the Senate jueteng probe of a distant past to a coup plot these days. To say more is to dignify what is ridiculous and preposterous."

Iñiguez said Tobias' decision to help San Juan had been made during one meeting of some members of the Kilusang Makabansang Ekonomiya. The group includes Tobias, Iñiguez, and Labayen.

During the meeting, Iñiguez said the members agreed to extend some form of help to Magdalo soldiers in case their assistance was sought. Help could come in the form of a spiritual advice, prayer, Eucharistic celebration, or attendance in court hearings.

Gonzalez warns bishop: No one is above the law

From page A1

Gonzalez recalled that Tobias also gave "protection" to "jueteng" witnesses Abe Rivas and Richard Garcia when they were under investigation by the Senate. "That's clearly partisanship already," he said.

No specific conclusions

"We have not made any specific conclusions. I hope that things like these are not being sanctioned or condoned by the Church as an institution," he said.

Gonzalez said that it did not help that Tobias even said that "we should be thankful to him that he gave safe haven to these rebels. He was also saying that these people he gave sanctuary were the more honorable people."

In the television interview, Tobias said his actions were sanctioned by the Geneva Convention.

But Gonzalez said: "What I know in international law is that civilians and noncombatants should be given safety but definitely these rebel soldiers do not fall under these category."

He said talks should be conducted "to get a sense of the Church hierarchy how far they're willing to go, including giving aid and comfort to the enemies of the state."

"I really believe that if we want to give life to the doctrine of separation of Church and state, we should define the parameters because the separation is a thin line," Gonzalez said.

CIDG, NBI probe

As to reports that there are six Catholic bishops who are involved in the failed Feb. 24 coup, Gonzalez said his department was looking at this and the credibility of people making the accusations.

TOBIAS: Avoiding print reporters

GONZALEZ: Give shelter only for noncombatants and civilians.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita told reporters yesterday that the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group and the National Bureau of Investigation would look into how deep Tobias' involvement was in the anti-Arroyo plot.

The inquiry also would cover other Church leaders and individuals.

Ermita said government lawyers were now determining "what penalties can be slapped on somebody who gives succor or sanctuary to those who are fighting the government."

But Ermita stressed that the government had not yet expanded the leftist-rightist conspiracy to topple Ms Arroyo to include Church leaders following the Tobias statement.

Church not involved

"Just because we know one or two leaders of the Church are involved does not mean the whole Church is involved," Ermita said.

Ermita said that while some bishops had questioned Ms Arroyo's legitimacy and accused her family of receiving illegal gambling payoffs, they had done this as individuals.

If Tobias acted like a good citizen should, Ermita said the bishop should have immediately informed authorities about the fugitives. "If I were him, I would have told them (Magdalo soldiers), 'Look, you better not stay in my place because within minutes authorities will be here, otherwise, I will be charged with harboring criminals.' That is the best thing to do."

The government will not hesitate to arrest Tobias if found guilty, Ermita said. "No one should be above the law. If there are violations of the Revised Penal Code, everyone will understand why the law has to be applied equally to everybody."

Troops hunt Abu Sayyaf rebs who pulled off Jolo ambush

JOLO, SULU—SOLDIERS AND POLICE yesterday pursued Muslim extremists who ambushed a group of policemen on Tuesday, killing an officer and two government militiamen, officials said.

Two officers who were reported missing after the attack outside Maimbung town on Jolo island were later found unharmed, said acting Jolo provincial police Chief Superintendent Hakam Pae.

Al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf gunmen manning a checkpoint fired at the officers and militiamen, who were on their way to pacify warring families in a village outside Maimbung, killing two militiamen and one officer and wounding three others.

Pae said yesterday that soldiers and police were pursuing the guerrillas, but had not yet made contact.

Jolo is a stronghold of the Abu Sayyaf, notorious for ransom kidnappings, beheadings and bombings, including a February 2004 attack that gutted a ferry ship and killed 116 people in one of Southeast Asia's worst terrorist attacks.

US troops also have a presence on the island, focusing on humanitarian missions as part of counterterrorism efforts.

In the past few months, Abu Sayyaf hit men were suspected in several drive-by shootings that killed several soldiers, officials said. *AP*

HIDALGO

After DepEd, Hidalgo eyes private sector

By Alcuin Papa

ACTING EDUCATION SECRETARY FE HIDALgo is leaving public service for the private sector after newly appointed Education Secretary Jesli Lapus takes over at the end of the month.

"I am thinking about it. I am thinking of going back to the private sector. When? Perhaps after the transition period [of] around two months," she said in an interview.

Hidalgo earlier indicated she would be staying on in the Department of Education where she was undersecretary for projects and planning before being made officer in charge last year.

She said Lapus had asked her to stay on and she had accepted. Lapus also told reporters that he would like to have Hidalgo remain at the DepEd.

But apparently, Hidalgo has changed her mind and is firm about leaving.

"I might go into entrepreneurship. I need to help myself," she said, laughing.

But she admitted she didn't know exactly what to do after being in education for so long.

"You miss it," she said.

Malacañang announced last week the appointment of Lapus, the congressman from Tarlac and former bank president, as the new education secretary.

The announcement sparked protests from the DepEd employees' union which was pushing hard for the appointment of Hidalgo as the permanent secretary.

The employees have threatened to block the entrance to the DepEd office on Meralco Ave. in Pasig to prevent Lapus from holding office.

Hidalgo took over in an acting capacity in August 2005 after the then secretary, Florencio Abad, joined the Cabinet group, referred to as the Hyatt 10, that resigned their positions and demanded that President Macapagal-Arroyo step down.

Just before the beginning of classes this year, Hidalgo got a public scolding from the President during a Cabinet meeting when she delivered a report on the number of classroom shortages in the country.

Hidalgo started to say there was a shortage of around 6,000 classrooms when the President cut her off and told the education official that there were actually no shortages.

Hidalgo, who is turning 70 on July 29, started out as a classroom teacher in her native Batanes in 1959. She holds a bachelor's degree in elementary education from the Philippine Normal College, a master's in education from the Macquarie University in Australia and numerous certificate degrees.

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WAR
is NOT
S**T
BUSH

THE FOUR-LETTER WORD THAT WAS HEARD 'ROUND THE WORLD is splattered on a sign as several thousand Arab-Americans in Dearborn, Michigan march to demand an end to Israel's relentless bombing of Lebanon and Gaza. REUTERS

ROMANCING THE WAR: Moments after Hezbollah rockets hit Israel's third-largest city, Haifa, Imad Musa and his bride Anita Mischel walk down an empty street on their wedding day. REUTERS

RP plea: Please allow Filipinos to hitch ride

From page A1

in their respective vessels out of Lebanon."

The DFA also instructed Philippine missions in Paris, London and Rome to make "similar representations" or follow the matter up with their host states.

Chargé d'Affaires Evan Garcia of the Philippine Embassy in Washington said he had already made the same appeal to the US Department of State.

In reply, Garcia said the state department "advised that, although (its) first priority is the evacuation of American nationals, the US government will try to help evacuate Filipinos as well, to the extent that it would be safe to do so, and within the limits of available resources."

Garcia, in his report to the DFA, explained that for the United States to give such help, it would need information from Manila on the numbers, locations and identities of the Filipinos to be evacuated.

In a parallel move, the DFA also instructed Philippine embassies in the countries surrounding Lebanon to coordinate with their respective host states "to ensure the safe passage" of Filipino evacuees who may be crossing their borders.

Five "transit or staging points" outside Lebanon have also been designated for the repatriation—Cyprus, Turkey, Rhodes in Greece and Damascus and Tartus in Syria.

Finally, an exit plan

With 15 staffers manning its embassy in Beirut, Manila finally came out with a concrete exit plan days into the sustained Israeli air assault on the Middle East nation.

"As we speak, it is happening now," Asuque told reporters in a briefing later, referring to the Beirut-Damascus bus trips which he said would kick off the government's "Oplan-Sagip OFW sa Lebanon."

Asked if the bus fleet would have military escorts, Asuque could only say that Philippine missions in Beirut and Tel Aviv have done "coordinations to ensure safe passage" for Filipino evacuees.

"We will speak with whoever is manning the checkpoints," he stressed.

Relocation sites

Asuque said that aside from the Catholic parish, there were six other relocation sites in the city "but as much as possible we would like to concentrate them in just one site" for easier transport.

"This is what we mean by 'innovative approach'," he said, referring to his previous statement conceding the lack of ships or military aircraft the government could dispatch to speed up the exodus.

Cornejo said the movement of the 200 Filipinos had been cleared with the Israeli government by Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo. They include 80 distressed workers staying at Philippine resource centers in Beirut, 36 detained at deportation centers and others abandoned by their employers.

He said that the small number of Filipinos who had registered to move out meant many believed that the conflict was not widespread and had no immediate desire to repatriate.

"What government is providing them is the option (that) if you feel you are in danger, come to the relocation center. If you feel you are in danger in Lebanon, we will take you out of Lebanon," he said.

"The decision will be yours at this time," Cornejo said.

Repatriation voluntary

The government will only order a forced or mandatory evacuation in Lebanon if the violence in Lebanon becomes widespread and there is violence in the streets, Cornejo said. "At this point, it's still voluntary on their part," he said.

Labor Undersecretary Danilo Cruz said that the majority of Filipino workers in Lebanon were employed by Christian foreigners and were living in Christian districts—areas not being targeted by the Israelis.

The labor department is providing a 24-hour hotline telephone service for families of OFWs in Lebanon seeking information: 833-6992 or 551-1560 or text their message at 0917-8986992.

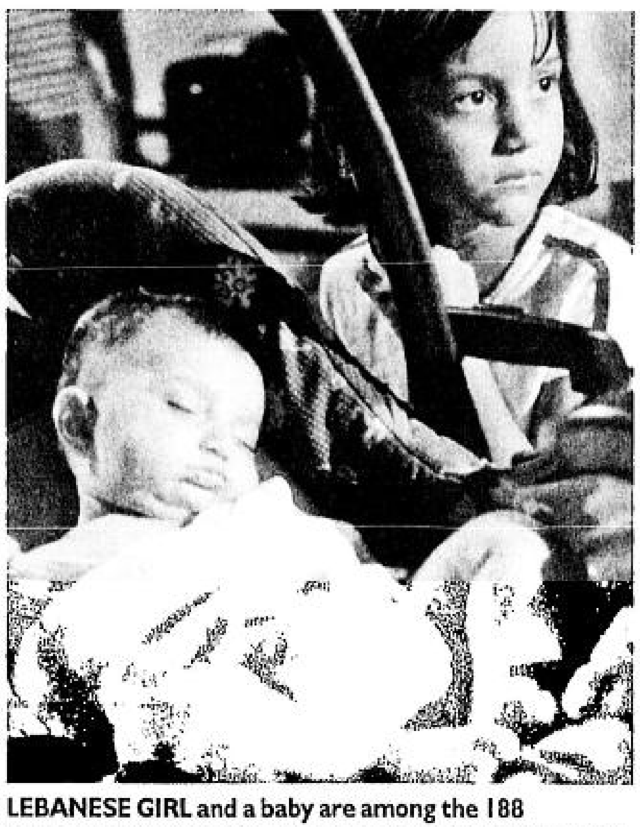
Cruz said that 10 phone lines would be made available in the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration office so that families could call up their loved ones in Lebanon.

'Not as dangerous'

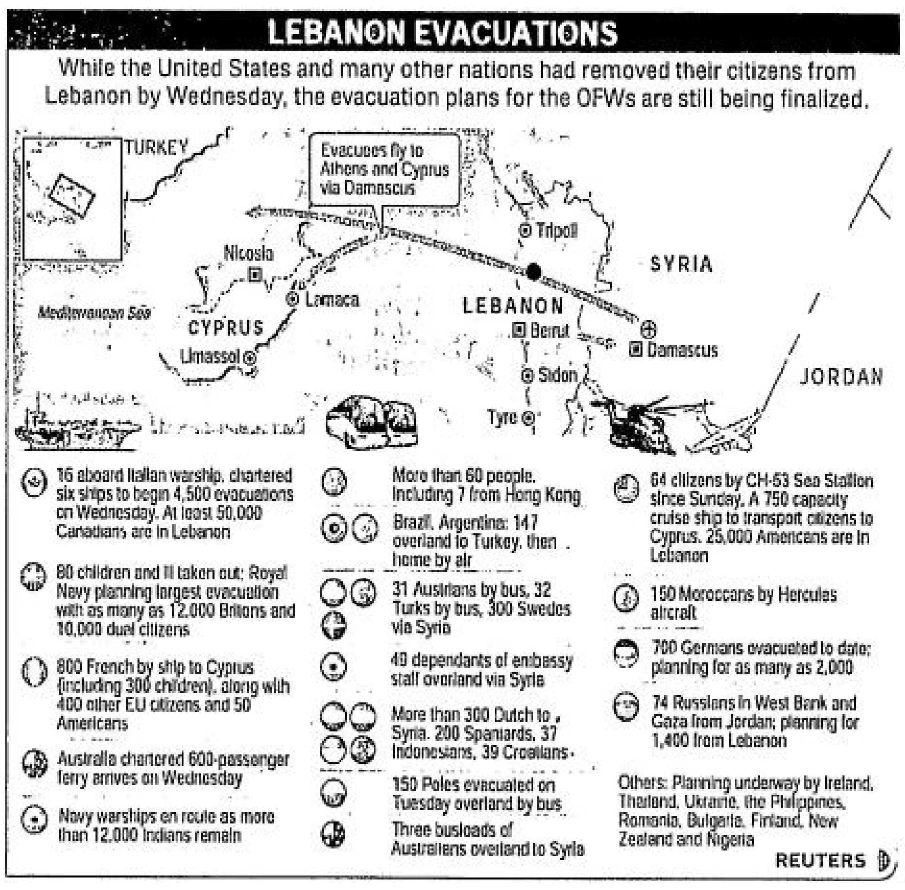
Also yesterday, the United Philippine Manpower Agencies to Israel Association composed of 21 licensed overseas recruitment agencies deploying OFWs to Israel, said "everything was normal" in the big cities of Tel Aviv, Haifa and the southern part of Israel.

In a statement, Ramon Estrella, UPMAIA president, said the situation in Israel "was not as dangerous" compared to that in Lebanon. He said the POEA had not stopped the processing of workers bound for Israel.

In a message relayed by the Apostolic Nuncio to the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, Pope Benedict XVI urged the Filipino faithful to pray for peace in the Middle East. *With reports from Christine O. Avendaño, Nikko Dizon, Jerome Aning, Christian V. Esguerra, and Joey A. Gabrieta, Jolene R. Bulambot, Jhunnex Napallacan and Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau, AP*



LEBANESE GIRL and a baby are among the 188 Lebanese-Swedish dual nationals who arrive safely in the southern port city of Turkey, Mersin. REUTERS



LEBANON EVACUATIONS

While the United States and many other nations had removed their citizens from Lebanon by Wednesday, the evacuation plans for the OFWs are still being finalized.

16 aboard Italian warship, chartered six ships to begin 4,500 evacuations on Wednesday. At least 50,000 Canadians are in Lebanon

80 children and ill taken out; Royal Navy planning largest evacuation with as many as 12,000 Britons and 10,000 dual citizens

800 French by ship to Cyprus (including 300 children), along with 400 other EU citizens and 50 Americans

Australia chartered 600-passenger ferry arrives on Wednesday

Navy warships en route as more than 12,000 Indians remain

More than 60 people, including 7 from Hong Kong

Brazil, Argentina: 147 overland to Turkey, then home by air

31 Austrians by bus, 32 Turks by bus, 300 Swedes via Syria

40 dependants of embassy staff overland via Syria

More than 300 Dutch to Syria. 200 Spaniards, 37 Indonesians, 39 Croatians

150 Poles evacuated on Tuesday overland by bus

Three busloads of Australiens overland to Syria

64 citizens by CH-53 Sea Stallion since Sunday. A 750 capacity cruise ship to transport citizens to Cyprus. 25,000 Americans are in Lebanon

150 Moroccans by Hercules aircraft

700 Germans evacuated to date; planning for as many as 2,000

74 Russians in West Bank and Gaza from Jordan; planning for 1,400 from Lebanon

Others: Planning underway by Ireland, Thailand, Ukraine, the Philippines, Romania, Bulgaria, Finland, New Zealand and Nigeria

REUTERS

Ermita: RP will not take sides in war

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE PHILIPPINES WILL REMAIN neutral in the face of rising hostilities between Israel and Lebanon, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said yesterday.

"I don't think we should ever be involved [in this conflict]," said Ermita, adding that this included not deploying Filipino troops to an international peace keeping force being formed by the United Nations to enforce a ceasefire agreement between Israel and Lebanon.

"The Philippines has bilateral relations with many countries, especially those involved in the conflict. We are a member of the United Nations and so the Philippines will take the position taken by United Nations to call both parties to come together and bring their problems to an end," said Ermita in a statement.

No repeat of Iraq

There are thousands of Filipinos working in both Israel and Lebanon and the government does not want a repeat of the Iraq war where Filipino truck driver Angelo dela Cruz was abducted by Iraqi insurgents who demanded that the Philippines withdraw its troops from Iraq.

Dela Cruz was released and subsequently the small Philippine contingent on the side of the Coalition of the Willing pulled out of Iraq, a move that miffed the Americans.

"We are not taking sides in this conflict. When asked by the United Nations, we will have to seek wisdom whether we should consider such proposal," said Ermita.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan is proposing to bolster the 2,000-member force in south Lebanon as part of a possible ceasefire agreement.

8th day: Israel unleashes more air strikes, sends ground troops

From page A1

Rice would then go to the region and seek to set up a 20-km buffer zone in southern Lebanon to keep Hezbollah away from the Israeli border.

According to The New York Times, Israelis are also open to the deployment of a multinational force in Lebanon to prevent Hezbollah guerrillas from obtaining more rockets with which to bombard Israel.

On Wednesday, Israel said its air strikes and ground assaults had destroyed "about 50 percent" of the arsenal of Hezbollah, whose guerrillas have bombarded Haifa and northern Israeli towns with 750 rockets that had left 13 civilians dead in the past eight days.

"It will take us time to destroy what is left," Brig. Gen. Alon Friedman, a senior Army commander, told Israeli Army Radio.

Ground attacks

Israeli troops crossed into Lebanon early Wednesday on a "seek and destroy" mission for Hezbollah weapons. Hezbollah claimed to have "repelled" Israeli forces near the coastal border town of Naqoura.

Israeli officials would not say how many soldiers were involved in the ground attacks. But Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, Dan Gillerman, stressed the incursion was not large-scale and would not last long.

"This is an operation which is very measured, very local," Gillerman told CNN. "This is no way an invasion of Lebanon. This is no way the beginning of any kind of occupation of Lebanon."

Israel, which has mainly limited itself to attacks from the air and sea, has been reluctant to send in ground troops because of bad memories of Israel's ill-fated 18-year occupation of south Lebanon that ended in 2000.

Israel's air strikes, however, continued to exact a heavy toll on Lebanese civilians.

Five people were killed when a missile struck a neighborhood in the southern Lebanese town of Nabatiyeh, police and hospital officials said. The target was a commercial office of a firm belonging to Hezbollah, but those killed were residents.

The bodies of three members of the Hamed family and a Sri Lankan maid were retrieved from the destroyed building. A fifth body remained under the debris.

Srifa massacre

At least 12 Lebanese, including several children, were killed and 30 wounded in an Israeli air strike that flattened 15 houses in the southern village of Srifa, residents said.

"There was a massacre in Srifa," a village official, Afif Najdi, told Reuters, saying he expected the death toll to climb to at least 17 once bodies had been pulled from the rubble.

In the southern village of Ghaziyeh, one person was killed and two were wounded when a missile struck a nearby building that housed a Hezbollah-affiliated social institution.

In the eastern Bekaa Valley, four people were killed and three were wounded in an air raid on the village of Loussi, police said.

Christian suburb hit

Israeli planes also stepped up their strikes on Beirut, hitting a Christian suburb on the eastern side of the city for the first time.

The target was a truck-mounted machine used to drill for water but which could have been mistaken for a missile launcher. The vehicle, parked in an empty lot in Ashrafieh, was destroyed but no one was hurt.

The planes also hit Beirut's southern suburbs, a Hezbollah stronghold, causing one explosion that reverberated across the city much louder than any previous impact in the eight days of fighting.

More Israeli missiles rained on two towns outside Beirut—Chuweifat and Hadath. One person was killed at the Galerie Semaan junction, near Hadath, police said.

Risky consensus

According to The New York Times, Rice was just waiting at least a few more days before wading into the conflict, in part to give Israel more time to weaken Hezbollah forces.

The strategy carries risk, partly because it remains unclear just how long the rest of the world, particularly America's Arab allies, will continue to stay silent as the toll on Lebanese civilians rises. US officials have, for the time being, gone along with an Israeli request for more latitude in its punitive campaign.

Israel had made clear that it did not want Rice to begin a peacemaking effort yet. US President George W. Bush and his senior officials have also resisted joining other world leaders in calling for an immediate ceasefire, reflecting the Israeli view that reaching a truce before destroying a significant number of Hezbollah's missiles would open Israel up to the possibility of more attacks in the future.

But a senior US official said that Israelis had been told there was a limit to how much more time the United States would be able to give Israel.

No time limit

Even so, Israel's Prime Minister Ehud Olmert on Wednesday said there was no time limit to Israel's offensive and there would be no negotiations with Hezbollah.

Olmert said Hezbollah had coordinated the abduction of the two Israeli soldiers with Iran, enabling Tehran to divert attention from its nuclear program.

Bush, on the other hand, described Hezbollah as the root cause of the current conflict and said Syria, which supports the Shiite Muslim group, was trying to "get back into Lebanon"—one year after ending its 29-year military presence.

Gov't weak

World powers have said Hezbollah must first free the two Israeli soldiers and stop cross-border attacks. Israel has also demanded that Hezbollah disarm in line with UN Security Council resolutions.

Lebanon's government, which wants an immediate ceasefire, said it had not received any clear proposal to end the fighting. The Beirut government, however, is too weak and divided to impose its authority on Hezbollah. *Reports from AP, Reuters and New York Times News Service*

Police get bigger piece of anti-insurgency action

By Luige A. del Puerto

POLICE HAVE FINALLY GOT what they have been clamoring for—a bigger piece of the action in the all-out war against the communist insurgents.

In an executive order, Malacañang has directed the Philippine National Police to "undertake a more active support role to the Armed Forces in internal security operations for the suppression of insurgency and other serious threats to national security."

Malacañang also authorized the police to deputize village watchmen as "force multipliers" in the drive to crush the 37-year-old communist rebellion.

A senior official earlier told the INQUIRER of the PNP's plan to train an auxiliary force similar to the Citizens Armed Forces Geographical Unit.

The idea is for the Cafgu to maintain perimeter defense and for the police auxiliary force to help flush out insurgents inside a community, the official said.

The EO, dated July 14, also ordered the interior department to secure the support of the local governments in the campaign.

"For this purpose, governors and mayors, as deputized representatives of the National Police Commission... shall ensure that sufficient funds shall be appropriated in their annual budget for the operational and logistical support of the concerned PNP unit for the implementation of this Executive Order," said the EO.

Palace asked to revive budget talks

WARNING THAT PUBLIC SERVICES could lose some P100 billion in funding this year, administration Sen. Ralph Recto yesterday urged Malacañang to help restart the stalled 2006 budget talks between the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Recto said restarting the talks would benefit the public more than drafting a supplemental budget as finance officials have suggested.

"I think Malacañang should work on forging common ground with the House and the Senate so that the 2006 budget can be rescued from the archives, instead of going through another grueling campaign of having a supplemental budget passed," Recto said in a statement.

"The 2006 budget is in its finishing stages. It is nearly finished while the supplemental budget is still on square one," he said.

Just like in 2004, the government has to operate on a reenacted budget for 2006 because of the failure of Congress to pass the P1.053-trillion budget proposed by Malacañang before going into recess last month.

The Senate and the House of Representatives failed to reconcile their differing versions of the budget. The House had passed a budget bill close to the Palace version while the Senate passed a supposedly leaner budget, slashing some P66 billion from Malacañang's planned appropriations.

Recto said the 2006 budget was vastly superior to a "reinforced, reenacted 2005 budget."

A supplemental budget was "tantamount to a budget cut" of around P100 billion, said Recto.

The senator argued that a supplemental budget of P50 billion as proposed by Finance Secretary Margarito Teves added to the P918 billion rolled-over 2005 budget would only amount to P968 billion.

"That's a hundred billion pesos lower than the P1.053 trillion ceiling proposed in the 2006 budget," he said.

"In short, the public will be shortchanged by P100 billion. This may look good on the financial report card government will be showing its creditors but it also shows money the people has been deprived of," Recto said.

The senator also fears that the savings from lower government spending would just be channeled into debt payments "given the propensity of the economic managers not to pass any opportunity to pre-terminate our debt."

He reminded government that "it entered into a contract with the people when it courted their support for new taxes, that in exchange for their sacrifice, there will be new investments in social services and infrastructure."

"The administration made a vow to plow back tax payments to the people and the budget was supposed to be the instrument of refund. But, by angling for lower spending, it seems to be reneging on its promise," Recto said.

Recto called on "reasonable men to let common sense prevail" and pass the 2006 national budget.

Philip C. Tubeza

Sorsogon bishop backs Lafayette mine test run

SORSOGON BISHOP EMERITUS Jesus Varela has expressed support for the test run of Lafayette's Rapu-Rapu polymetallic project, weeks after another Catholic bishop opposed its reopening

Varela said the test run would show if the corrective measures put in place by the company meet the standards for safe and responsible mining operations.

The bishop, who personally toured the project last week, said in a statement that the Church is not against mining itself but is opposed to irresponsible mining. He added he wanted to find out for himself if the objections of antimining groups to LPI's continued operations are valid or not.

Antimining groups led by Bishop Arturo Bastes, chair of the nine-man Rapu-Rapu fact-finding commission, had opposed the test run and the reopening of the Lafayette mine, saying it threatened the environment in the area.

"If the risks of mining in Rapu-Rapu can be avoided or substantially mitigated while the benefits can be palpably felt by its affected communities, then the company under its new Filipino management must be given a chance to conduct responsible mining; otherwise it should be closed down," Varela said.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources recently allowed the test run so the company can test if its corrective measures run properly before it is allowed to resume mining operations.

The three-stage test run first involved the circulation of water into the system to test for leakages. This stage of testing had been completed. On Tuesday, the DENR issued an order confirming that the project had fully complied with all the requirements of the first stage of testing and can proceed to the second stage which involves the processing of non-ore bearing materials to test the electromechanical systems.

Lafayette said it was confident the project will successfully complete the second stage within the allocated period of nine days and in due course receive authorization to proceed with the third stage which would involve the use of ore-bearing materials and chemical reagents.

The new management team under Carlos G. Dominguez took over the project in mid-January following government sanctions for spills involving process water in October.

PAL collects fee for gun handling

By Nikko Dizon

FLAG CARRIER PHILIPPINE AIRLINES (PAL) on Tuesday began charging a service fee for the handling of the firearms that its passengers would check in for domestic flights.

The service fee amounts to P300, plus the 12-percent value-added tax (VAT). According to a memo obtained by the INQUIRER yesterday, the service fee will cover the administrative cost incurred by the airline in handling the firearms as well as the insurance for loss or damage.

Airline passengers are required to check in firearms and other dangerous items, especially in the light of the global threat of terrorism.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, July 20, 2006
15th Week in Ordinary Time
Apollinaris

1st Reading: Is 26:7-9, 12, 16-19
Gospel: Matthew 11:28-30

Jesus spoke thus, "Come to me, all you who work hard and who carry heavy burdens and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle and humble of heart; and you will find rest. For my yoke is good and my burden is light."

Commentary

Isaiah yearns for God in the night and for time with the earth. Its people will learn justice, and God will mete out peace to us. It is God who gives birth to us and it is a hard labor of love that brings the dew of light and everlasting life. And this is Jesus' prayer to those who are weary and find life burdensome. Our God in Jesus refreshes us. We are given the yoke (for mission and work, the yoke of the cross and the yoke that draws us into the dance of resurrection). Our God is humble, gentle (non-violent) and if we are yoked to Jesus then our burdens are made light and we know that being bound to God is life beyond imagining.

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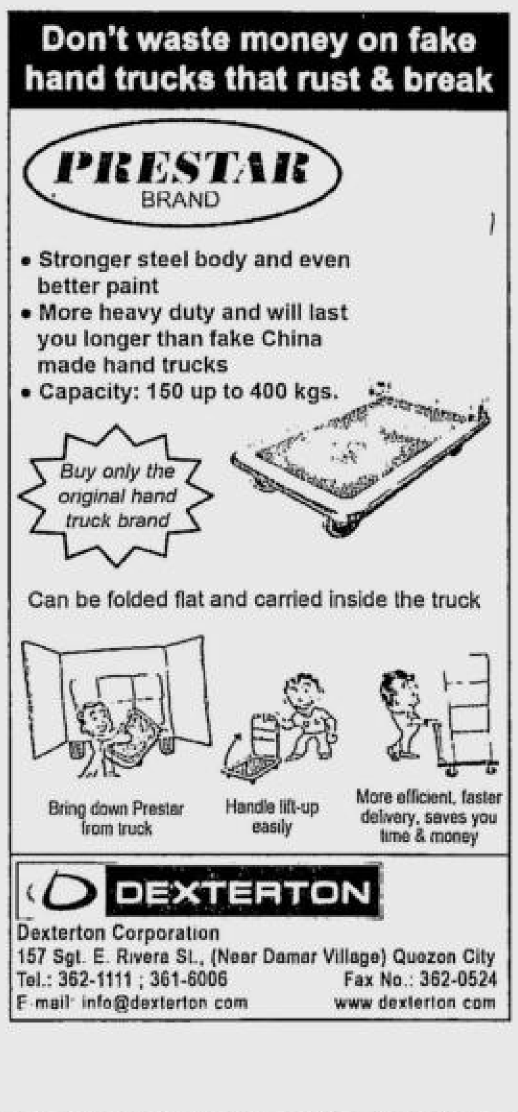
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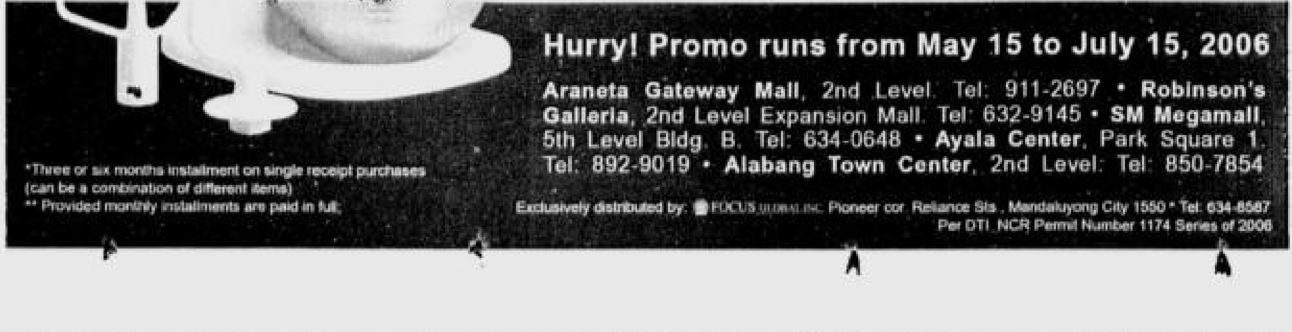
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Mayon: Killer lahar feared

By Ephraim Aguilar
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LEGAZPI CITY—MT. MAYON'S LAHAR could be much more dangerous than that of Mt. Pinatubo in Zambales, which buried thousands of houses in 1991, due to the presence of big boulders on Mayon, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said yesterday.

Resident volcanologist Eduardo Laguerta said Mayon's lahar would contain massive boulders which could wreak total havoc on anything on their path while that of Pinatubo only submerged the houses in lahar in the absence of the big boulders.

Aside from pyroclastic flows, lahar is one of the two major hazards of Mt. Mayon eruptions that the Albayanos should brace for, the Phivolcs official said.

Laguerta said that pryoclastic flows in past eruptions usually affect areas within the six-to-seven-kilometer PDZ only.

But he said there had been two occasions when Mt. Mayon's pyroclastic flows reached beyond the six-kilometer-radius Permanent Danger Zone. One was during the 1814 eruption and the other, in 1897 when the pryoclastic flows even reached the sea in the Sto. Domingo, Albay area.

"What we have to invest upon more money in prevention is lahar since it is a long term and capricious hazard in any volcano. In Pinatubo, for instance, it took around 10 years before it subsided," Laguerta said.

What is dangerous with lahar, he said, is that even if one were positioned 20 kilometers away from the volcano but were facing a channel in a low-lying area, one can be reached by the gushing lahar—depending on the volume and amount of rainfall.

After simmering down on Tuesday, Mayon again exhibited increased signs of restiveness with 250 tremor episodes monitored in the last 24 hours until 6 a.m. yesterday.

Phivolcs said sulfur dioxide emissions have increased to 2,157 tons per day as lava flows continued in the Bonga Gully, less than three kilometers from the crater.

"Seismic activity apparently resumed to high levels," suggesting lava extrusion and rock falls, the Phivolcs said in its latest advisory.

"At this stage, Mayon continues its mild eruption with little or no explosions," Phivolcs said.

Lava fragments were also observed to have reached farther downslope at least about four kilometers from the crater.

Phivolcs, however, assured that all flows and rockfalls were within the six-kilometer-radius PDZ.

Ash falls derived mainly from lava fragments may be experienced in areas beyond the PDZ due to prevailing winds.

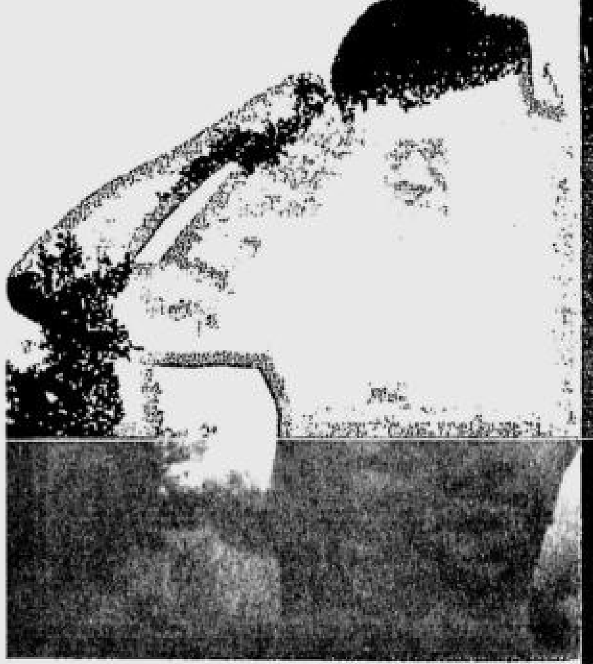
"The public, however, is reminded that explosions are still very possible and the probability of life-threatening pyroclastic flows resulting from an explosive eruption remains high," the Phivolcs warned.

"As time progresses, there is lesser time we have to wait before an explosive eruption occurs," Laguerta said.

He noted that the parameters and signs observed yesterday in the Mt. Mayon were also observed in its past eruptions and they always led to a major eruption.

Farmers working on the lower slopes of the cone-shaped Mayon were warned yesterday to leave the slopes.

"We are worried about the people who remain in the permanent danger zone. There are livestock in there as well," said regional disaster coordinating council official Angel Capili. *With a report from B. S. Rivera and AFP*



AS MAYON remains restive and more lava continue

Law dean urges House minority not to surrender impeachment bid

A LEGAL EXPERT HAS CALLED ON THE MINORity bloc in the House of Representatives to push amendments in the chamber's impeachment rules instead of conceding defeat in their second impeachment complaint against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"Proponents of the second impeachment complaint would be better off making good on their plan to work on amending the impeachment rules when Congress reopens next week instead of conceding defeat this early," said Dean Amado Valdez of the University of the East (UE) College of Law.

"Seeking amendments to the impeachment rules is a far better course of action than declaring premature surrender, considering that having the President impeached … is the one and only constitutional mode of resolving such serious charges and putting a long-overdue closure to the lingering political standoff."

Moreover, he said in a press statement, the minority bloc's pursuit of this option when Congress resumes session on Monday is also in keeping with the position of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) on the need for a change in House rules to keep the impeachment process from becoming an "unproductive political exercise."

He added, though, that the opposition would have to explain what changes it wants to introduce to the impeachment procedures, because such rules were supported by the minority when these were approved in 2004.

The UE law dean was reacting to this week's admission by minority leader Francis Escudero that only a miracle can unseat President Arroyo. Opposition Sen. Aquilino Pimentel had also called on opposition congressmen to give up their impeachment efforts, which he also described as a futile exercise. He instead proposed a compromise—a snap election wherein Ms Arroyo would be barred from running.

Valdez said the House opposition itself had voted for an impeachment rule that compels the House justice committee to first decide whether the complaint is sufficient in form and substance.

Gov't crackdown on 'fly-by-night' reviewers sought

By Alcuin Papa

REVIEW CENTERS MUST BE CLOSELY REGUlated by government to prevent "leakages" during board exams and to arrest the downward slide of the education system, a higher education official said.

Julito Vitriolo, deputy executive director of the Commission on Higher Education, said that once a regulatory or system is in place to oversee the review centers, "fly-by-night" operators can be weeded out to prevent them from preying on innocent students.

A regulatory system would lead to a close scrutiny of the standards of the review centers, said Vitriolo who made the comments in the wake of the reported leak in the test questions during the recent nursing board exams.

"If review centers are not regulated, this could lead to the deterioration of the education system," said the CHEd official.

Vitriolo said a law should be passed providing for heavy penalties for wrongdoing by any review center, such as involvement in any "leakage" or cheating in the board exams.

"Congress should move to create and pass a law that would punish these review centers which are mostly only after profit from students," he said.

Vitriolo said no erring review center has been punished because there is no regulatory body in charge of monitoring them.

He explained that at present review centers only need secure the necessary permits and documentation from the Securities and Exchange Commission to be allowed to operate.

None of the centers are scrutinized for the quality of their teaching, he said.

"Under present laws, review centers are not answerable for any leakage or cheating during the board exams," he said.

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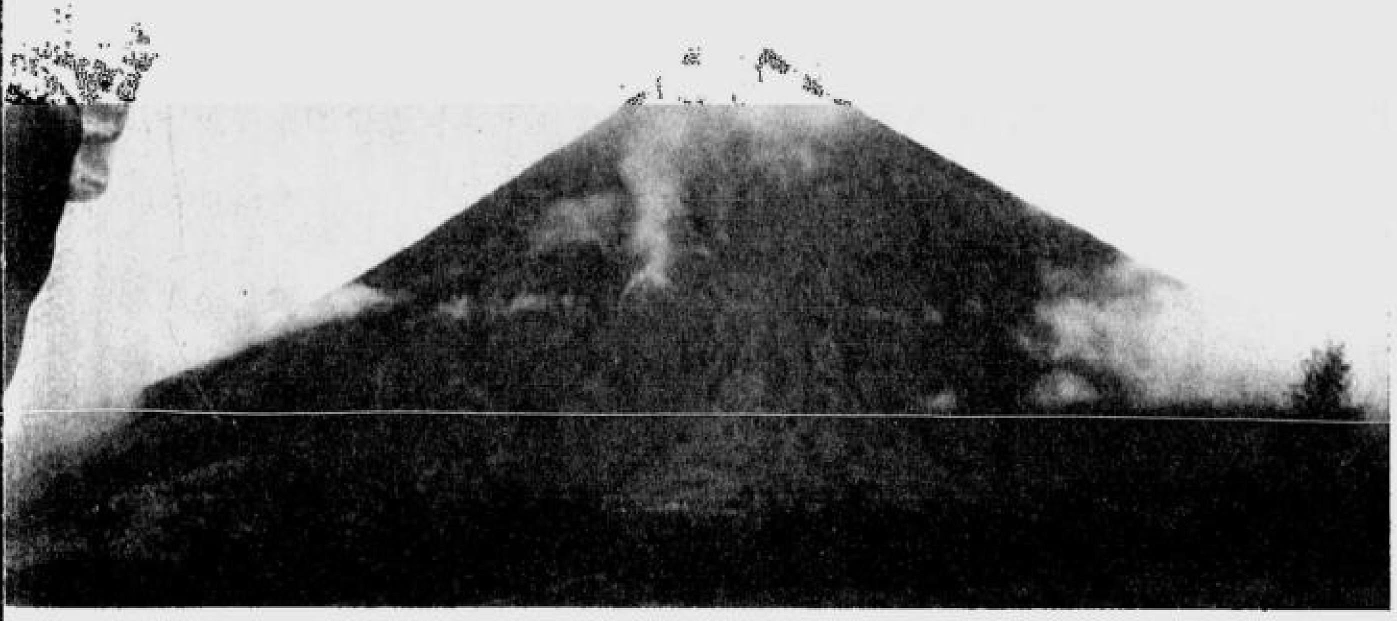

s to flow from its mouth, life goes on for this farmer in Barangay Matanag in Lagazpi City. EDWIN BACASMAS

Senga orders court martial vs Lim et al.

By Dona Pazzibugan

THE ARMED FORCES HAS ANNOUNCED IT will initiate court martial proceedings against 175 officers and soldiers implicated in the Feb. 24 plot to oust President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Outgoing Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga yesterday gave the order to start the pre-trial investigation preparatory to court martial against 40 officers and 135 enlisted personnel.

Senga issued the order only two days before he is to retire on July 21.

Col. Tristan Kison, the AFP Public Information Office chief, said Senga has approved the report on the investigation into the Feb. 24 plot made by an eight-person military fact-finding panel headed by AFP Inspector General Rear Admiral Rufino Lopez. *(See related story on page A2)*

Lopez submitted the panel's 43-page report last July 7, a few days after a draft 33-page report was leaked to the media.

"He [Senga] approved the report in whole," said Kison.

"The Chief of Staff has directed the Judge Advocate General to conduct a pre-trial investigation to determine whether a prima facie case exists that would warrant referral for trial by court martial," he said.

Senga submitted the Lopez panel's report to Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz Jr. at 3 p.m. yesterday, he said.

Kison said the names of the officers who were recommended for pre-trial investigation would be released today.

He said of the 40 officers to be investigated, 25 are from the Army and 15 from the Marines.

He did not say which units the 135 enlisted personnel belong to.

The officers and soldiers are to be charged, in varying degrees, with violations of the Articles of War 65 (disrespect for the President), 67 (mutiny or sedition), 68 (failure to suppress mutiny or sedition), 96 (conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman) and 97 (conduct prejudicial to good order and military discipline).

"Those who appeared in TV could be charged with disrespect for the President," Kison said.

The draft report leaked to the media said 38 officers—20 from the Army, mostly Scout Rangers, and 18 from the Marines—and 27 enlisted personnel had been recommended for court martial.

The list was led by Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, the dismissed First Scout Rangers Regiment commander, Marine Col. Ariel Querubin and former Marine commandant Maj. Gen. Renato Miranda.

Lim was shown on videotape declaring his withdrawal of support for a "bogus President."

The investigators said Lim and Querubin planned to lead troops from the Scout Rangers, Marines and the Philippine National Police Special Action Force in a protest march to Edsa on Feb. 24 and declare their withdrawal of support from the President.

It said Lim and Querubin tried to convince Senga to join them in the withdrawal of support "to avoid bloodshed."

Without Senga's support, the plot fizzled out.

Senga has denied reports that he initially agreed to participate in the plot.

The investigators also said the standoff at the Marine headquarters in Fort Bonifacio last Feb. 26 that Querubin led ostensibly to protest Miranda's sudden relief, was part of the coup plot.

The other members of the fact-finding board are Army Inspector General Maj. Gen. Ferdinand Bocobo, the board's vice chair; Maj. Gen. Nilo Deypalubos; Rear Admiral Rogelio Calunsag; Col. Caridad Aguilar; Col. Vicente Porto; Col. Carlix Donila and Col. Gaudencio Pangilinan.

Last March, the Office of the Army Inspector General recommended court martial against Lim and a number of Scout Ranger officers and men for their involvement in the coup plot.

Senga formed the eight-person Lopez panel in April to consolidate the Army and Marine investigations.

Under military rules, the Armed Forces Chief has to approve every step of the court martial process which officially starts with a pre-trial investigation.

After the pre-trial investigation, the Chief of Staff decides whether to form a general court martial tribunal to try the case.

The decision of the tribunal has to be reviewed and approved by the Chief of Staff, and then by the President, before it becomes final.

SC grants petition for habeas corpus for 2 UP students

THE SUPREME COURT YESTERDAY GRANTED the petition for habeas corpus filed by the parents of two missing University of the Philippines students and ordered the military to present them in court on July 24.

The high court issued a writ of habeas corpus compelling respondents from the military to present the bodies of Sherlyn Cadapan and Karen Empeño before the Court of Appeals.

The respondents are Major. Gen. Romeo Tolentino, commanding officer of Northern Luzon Command, Gen. Jovito Palparan, commanding general of the 7th Infantry Division based at Fort Magsaysay, Laur, Nueva, Ecija, Lt. Col. Rogelio Boac, commanding officer of Task Force Bulacan, and a certain Lt. Samson and Arnel Enriquez.

The court also ordered that farmer Manuel Marito—who was allegedly abducted with the two UP students—be brought to the 10 a.m hearing at the appellate court on July 24.

Cadapan, Empeño and Marito are believed to have been abducted by soldiers on June 26 in Hagonoy, Bulacan.

The high court ordered CA Presiding Justice Ruben Reyes to immediately raffle the case to the CA justices and "thereafter hear the petition, decide the same and submit a report" to the SC.

On July 17, spouses Asher and Erlinda Cadapan and Concepcion Empeño filed a petition for habeas corpus to force Nolcom commanders to produce their daughters. They believed the girls were being held either at the headquarters of the 56th Infantry Battalion of the Task Force Bulacan, at Iba, Hagonoy or at Fort Magsaysay in Laur, Nueva Ecija.

The petitioners claimed that Sherlyn and Karen, who were staying in the house of a certain Raquel Halili, at Barangay San Miguel, Hagonoy, Bulacan were forcibly taken by soldiers from the 56th IB.

They said Merino was taken as well after he tried to stop the soldiers. *Armand N. Nocum*

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President Abalos?

EDITORIAL

THE LAWYER OF ELECTION COMMISSIONER RESurreccion Borra has swung into action, and his sword cuts a swath wide enough to include even Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos. Essentially, his weapon seeks to grant immunity from suit on all impeachable officials—rather like a king's all-forgiving saber on a knight's shoulder.

We find his legal argument disturbing, because it has the Marcosian effect of turning the privilege of high office into a license to commit crime.

"Chairman Abalos and the rest of the Comelec commissioners would be doing their office and our people a great disservice if they submit themselves to a probe by an investigating body which clearly and by its own admission has no authority over impeachable officials," Borra's counsel said.

Let us set aside the question of which is the greater disservice—participation in the Ombudsman's probe or approving the anomalous Mega Pacific deal in the first place.

Borra's lawyer is merely putting into his own words Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez's own institution-defeating attitude to the issue at hand.

"'Submitting themselves to the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman despite the clear want or absence of authority, popular as it may seem in the near term, is setting a wrong precedent that will certainly undermine their office as well as the Comelec as an institution," Borra's lawyer said.

Again, let us set aside the question of the false balance that the argument oh-so-delicately strikes, between legal nuance and its supposed enemy, mere (in fact, merely near-term) popularity.

The argument can be reduced to one clear sentence: Impeachable officials can only be charged after they have been impeached from office.

To be scrupulously fair, it was the Office of the Ombudsman which first deployed this argument, when it partially complied with the Supreme Court's decision by rushing a resolution on the Mega Pacific case on June 30. And it was Abalos who seconded it, in interviews he granted last week.

The question begs to be asked, however. If the legal issue is as open-and-shut as the Ombudsman, Abalos and Borra's lawyer all suggest, then why did the Supreme Court repeatedly order the Ombudsman to determine the criminal liability of those involved in the flawed election automation contract—election commissioners included? Surely, the Court did not mean to suggest that the Ombudsman find in favor of the commissioners—regardless of the evidence.

Borra's defense rests on two Supreme Court decisions, Lecaroz vs. Sandiganbayan and Cuenco vs. Fernan. His argument suggests that both the defining facts of the two cases and the jurisprudence they gave rise to fully apply to the issue at hand.

We think this defense is misconceived. We think Abalos and other election commissioners or the offices they occupy do not rise to the level of the presidency, as contemplated in our Constitution and in our legal tradition. We think Abalos and the other commissioners who were involved in the Mega Pacific anomaly are not, and should not be, immune from suit.

Borra's defense rests, in particular, on Cuenco vs. Fernan. We think that the factual basis in that per curiam resolution is not only radically different from the one involving the election commissioners; the reasoning that Supreme Court justices cannot be disbarred until they are impeached does not hold either.

If Abalos and other commissioners who approved the Mega Pacific deal are in fact liable, charges can be filed against them even if they are not yet removed from office. Let us rephrase that: Charges should be filed, because otherwise the constitutional principle that public office is a public trust becomes hollow. The Supreme Court's repeated reminder to the Ombudsman on the flawed and useless automation deal gives us hope that it will, if the occasion presents itself, revisit the ruling in Cuenco vs. Fernan—and thus strike a blow for democracy's gold standard: greater public accountability.

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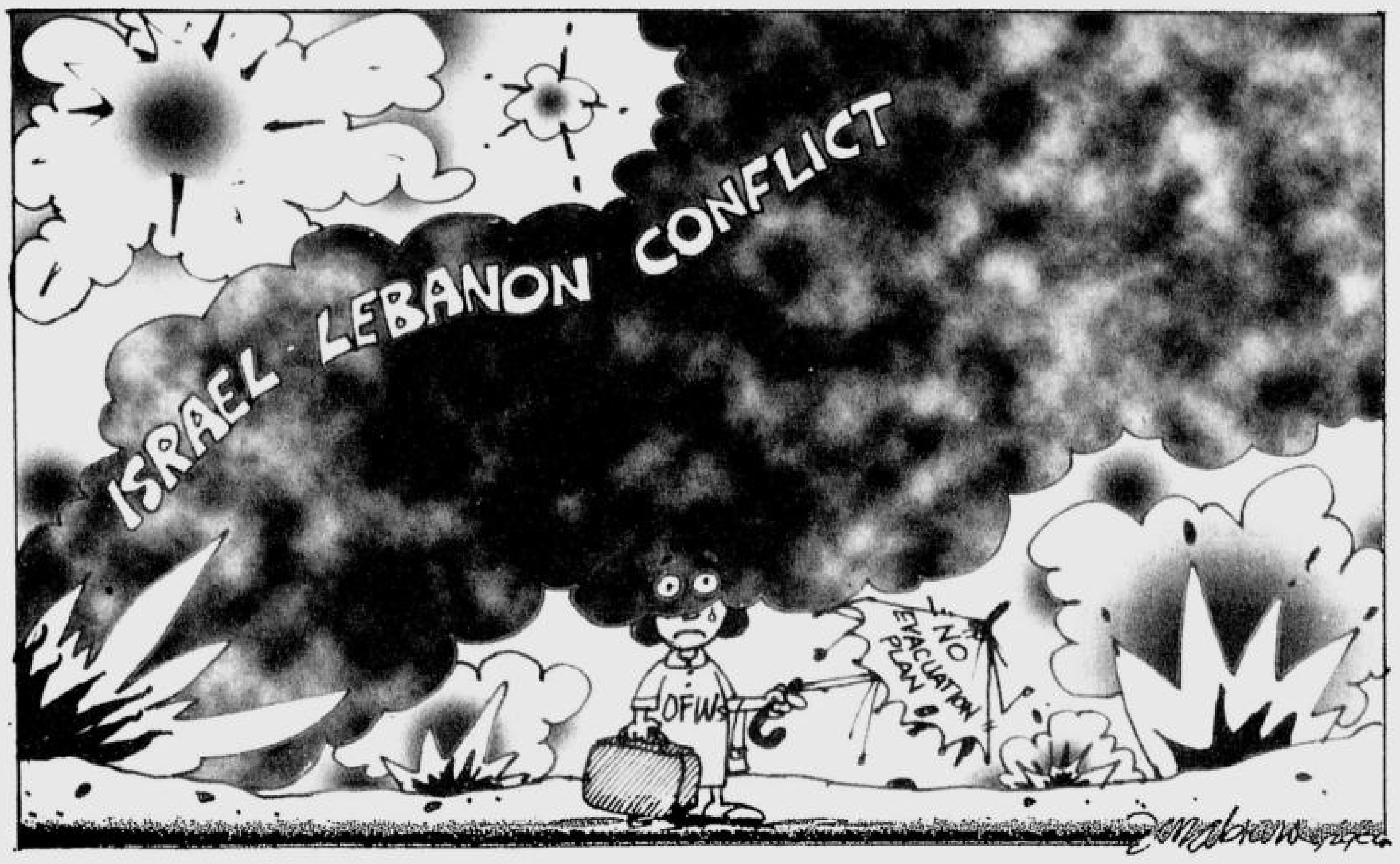

Ratcheting demand

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

REPORTS ON STRANDED OVERSEAS WORKers in Lebanon nudged aside, for now, local political bickering. As Israel and Hezbollah swap rockets, oil prices edge toward $80 a barrel. Our city tunnel vision is hypnotized by likely fuel price spurts.

But for rural folk, firewood is the main fuel. In Asia, about two billion people rely on wood fuels. In a deforested country like ours, where will firewood and charcoal come from? some people ask.

Women and children in the provinces traditionally gathered fuel from nearby forests or surrounding fields. Easily available, it cost nothing.

Not anymore. Massive deforestation compels people to forage further. Like Bangladesh, the forest cover in Cebu, for example, is almost zero. And rural residents find they can gather even less wood. Collecting wood fuel now takes an hour, sometimes more.

"About half the population depends on fuelwood in the Philippines and Indonesia," the Food and Agriculture Organization notes. But, "in some parts of these countries, the situation is approaching critical levels."

Even in timber-rich countries, "localized scarcities" can occur, notes the FAO study, "Forest Resources of Tropical Asia." Papua New Guinea's highland provinces, for example, periodically reel from these shortages. "The supply situation is generally acute in all countries except Bhutan."

As in other Asian countries, charcoal is the other preferred fuel here. Produced mainly by rural folk, charcoal is peddled in cities. It has greater heat intensity, emits little smoke and is easy to transport.

Demand for charcoal is rising in tandem with prices for liquefied petroleum gas. A tank of LPG now costs P520 plus, up from P200 or so before 9/11. Hezbollah's proxy war for Iran and Syria and Israel's furious response may see the cost spiral further. That ratchets demand on forests.

Concern over the inability of forests to supply fuelwood emerged in the 1970s. And studies, over the next two decades, indicated less stress than first thought.

But new facts are reviving this concern. Oil prices are historically unprecedented. Before the Suez Canal war, oil cost $2 a barrel. It may smash through the $80 marker soon. Never before did the world population reach 6.4 billion. Factor into that rising expectations stemming from the "Cyberspace revolution." These give an indication of rising strain on what remains of forests.

Worldwide, 25 hectares of forest are cut down every minute, the World Commission on Forestry and Sustainable Development has estimated. Tropical countries of this region lose more than 3.9 million hectares yearly.

In 1575, forests blanketed 92 percent of these islands. When flash floods smashed Leyte, Aurora and Quezon, forest cover had been whittled down to 18 percent—far below the 30 percent safety benchmark.

Centuries of plunder have worked their way into our anguished proverbs. "Do not cut the tree to get the fruits," Tausugs and Ilocanos say.

In the 1960s, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Papua New Guinea and Cambodia followed the Philippines as it blazed the path for logging concessions. At that time, this country had 291 concessions sprawling over 9.5 million hectares. Indonesia issued licenses for 584 concessions.

That's kaput now. Many Filipino operations were "cream-and-scram": after logging, most concessionaires abandoned them. Timber barons splurged but did not reinvest in conservation and processing. In contrast, some Malaysian, PNG and Indonesian firms became multinational firms. Today, they operate in South America and Africa.

We were a prima donna among world timber exporters in the 1970s. Today, we are a wood pauper. We import wood from New Zealand, Sabah and Australia. In the process, we became, willy-nilly, a case study for how not to manage a vital—and if properly managed, renewable—resource like forests.

"The Philippines was the first Asia-Pacific country in the post-World War II era to extensively liquidate its forest wealth," notes the study, "Asia-Pacific Forestry Towards 2010." Its experience "provides a poignant lesson for (still forest-rich) countries like Cambodia, Burma, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands."

Forest plantations were one of this region's approach to close the gap. India and Burma, 140 years back, devoted their first plantations to teak (*tectona grandis*). Vietnam followed in 1908. The Philippines was a Johnny-come-lately, launching its first plantation in 1970.

The initial sporadic plantation activity accelerated in the second half of the century. It was driven "by the grim coalescence of two factors: shrinking area under natural forests and escalating demand for forest products."

In the 1970s, the Philippines expanded plantations with international aid. Planted extensively were *albizia falcataria*, *Gmelina arborea*, *Eucalyptus deglupta* for wood-based industries and *Leucaena leucocephala* for firewood, charcoal and leaf-meal production.

"By 1980, plantation forestry appears to have reached the threshold of a takeoff stage," the FAO said. Did we abort takeoff?

"In the Philippines, about 540,000 hectares of plantation were established," an International Tropical Timber Organization study notes. "However, many are called 'paper plantations.' Not because that is their eventual end use, but because it's the only place they exist. In the field, they have died from a combination of drought, sabotage, pests, fire or some other form of neglect."

We have no problem about our politicians forever quarreling. But can they spare time to address issues like impoverished, voiceless rural folk stripped of basic needs like fuel?

* * *

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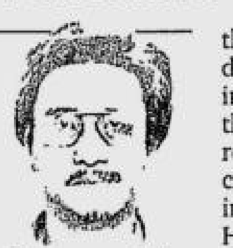
Under the volcano

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros



QUITE UNCANNILY, THE FRONT PAGE OF the INQUIRER last Tuesday told a story that went well beyond the individual stories contained there. Taken together, those stories gave the nation to see the true state of the nation, complete with a most graphic and startling image. That image may be captioned: "Under the volcano."

The volcano in this case is both literal and metaphorical. The literal volcano which is all set to explode is Mayon. It's been smoking this past week, regaling or intimidating the mortals below with its deadly fireworks. Folk there recall that the last time Mayon blew its top, which was in 1993, it devastated the land, killing people and livestock and burying crops in rock and dust.

Still, they persist in staying there now despite pleas for them to evacuate. Why is that? Well, I remember that when the Ultra tragedy happened, several interviewers asked me where I thought the Filipinos' passion for gambling came from. From many things, I said, but chief of them from desperation. It's not just our money we gamble with, it's our lives. Look at the folk living at the foot of volcanoes, like Mayon. They are making the high-stakes bet that somehow when the volcano gets fretful it will eventually calm down or spare them when it blows. What else is there? They do not leave and the volcano explodes, they die, by hellfire. They go and the volcano explodes, they die anyway, from hunger.

That is how the poor, who are most Filipinos, live today.

The figurative volcano is the one everyone was talking about before some of you were born, which was before martial law. That is the "social volcano." Everyone warned then that it was all set to explode, the magma in it being violently roiled by two things. One was the "spectacular divide between rich and poor," which daily became even more spectacular. Two, was oppression and injustice in the form of abusive landlords and employers, deaf judges and a corrupt government.

Those things don't just remain today, they've gotten spectacularly worse. Today, the oppression and injustice are supplied in concentrated and venomous form by the person who is about to apprise the nation of the state of the nation. The injustice has to do with that person having deprived the real winner of the last elections, Fernando Poe Jr., his rightful seat in Malacañang. And the oppression has to do with the efforts to stifle the truth, which has taken a murderous turn in past months.

Our front-page story last Tuesday about that not very funny joke, Joc-joc Bolante, reminds us that the burning issue in the country today remains GMA's legitimacy and her frenetic efforts to douse the fire by preventing every witness to the lie, ally or enemy, from blurting out what he knows. And our story about the investigation of the people behind Danny Lim's "coup" shows how the injustice is being corrected and the oppression resisted. If Lim's action was a coup at all, then it was, or would have been, the most popular coup in the world. Unlike past coup attempts, it wasn't one that expected to meet public consternation, it was one that expected to meet universal jubilation.

The spectacular divide between rich and poor was right there in our story about the plight of the OFWs in Lebanon, apart from our story about the folk at the foot of Mayon. Before martial law, everyone was saying that a situation not unlike France before 1789, where a Marie Antoinette could afford to throw cake to the hungry, could never hold. It was ripe for revolution. The social volcano was far too advanced in its fury, it was going to explode.

It did in part, but not in whole. Two things held it back. One was the petrodollars, the Ali Baba treasure the Opec countries dumped into the Western banks, which the banks in turn dumped into the hands of Third World tyrants, including Marcos. By mortgaging the future through loans, Marcos managed to calm down restiveness throughout the 1970s. His doom came when the petrodollars stopped flowing into the banks and the banks started collecting. He suddenly saw he was in worse shape than Faust: Banks are more implacable collectors on debts than Beelzebub.

The second was overseas work. That would prove to be the longer-lasting safety valve, one that has not only lasted till today but has become the country's very source of salvation. It's no longer just the safety valve, it's the engine itself. I remember someone asking me once in a forum abroad, "What's your country's main export?" I answered, "People." He laughed, thinking I was joking. I kept a straight face.

But as our story about the plight of our OFWS in Lebanon shows, that safety valve, or engine, has a steep price to pay. The source of salvation is also the source of perdition—for the saviors more than the saved. It is paid for by alienation, rape, death by bomb or bullet abroad and broken families at home. Indeed, as the case of Lebanon shows, there are limits to how far we can send our whole population to find glory abroad while fleeing Gloria at home. The global labor market is contracting, not expanding, while the competition is expanding, not contracting. We may have no limits to how far we are willing to turn from doctor to nurse, from engineer to canal-dredgers (don't you just wish our lawyers and politicians would do the patriotic thing and turn into drivers and forklift operators in Saudi?) but other countries have limits to how much of them they want. The Arab countries may also recall that not too long ago the head of this country was egging other countries to follow America and invade Iraq. Muammar Qaddafi might forget, but the Iraqis and Iranians won't.

There's the true plight of the Filipino, there's the true state of his nation:

Under the volcano.

The dividing line

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THERE SEEMS TO BE A LOT OF CONFUSION among people as to what constitutes treason or a simple harmless protest against the government. The confusion seems to be heightened especially by reports about the alleged move by some businessmen and former government officials to finance last Feb. 24's multi-group effort to bring down the Arroyo administration. Confusion was also raised by House Minority Leader Francis Escudero who asserted that the opposition in Congress had nothing to do with Feb. 24. He also asked when it has become a crime to attend a rally and support people who wish to express their sentiments, adding that no law has been violated. Escudero said that if some people broke the law, then they should be taken to court.

* * *

When is a protest action legal or not? I think the best way to explain it is to cite recent actions by opposition people. When Senate President Franklin Drilon and former President Cory Aquino went public, in separate but closely related moves last July 8, 2005, with their call for President Macapagal-Arroyo to resign, that was legal. So was the announcement by the Hyatt 10 of their withdrawal of support from GMA and their call for her resignation. These were all non-violent, peaceful protests by citizens guaranteed by the Constitution, whose parameters are defined by existing laws on citizens' assembly such as PD 88. It goes without saying that such peaceful rallies cannot use demagogic language that will incite people to rise up in arms against the government.

* * *

The resort to impeachment by members of Congress, too, falls under legal dissent. At this point, however, the prospect of impeaching GMA seems even more remote than last year. Unless the composition of the House committee on justice changes in time for the opening of the third regular session of the 13th Congress on Monday, among its 73 members are 49 from the majority and 13 from the minority. Among the ex-officio members, there are 24 majority and 18 minority members. I agree with House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles who recently opined that with the result in the committee on justice "quite predictable," the opposition should wait instead for the 2007 election and work hard to make it a referendum on the Arroyo administration. He said the opposition should seek to get 80 House members elected to ensure GMA's impeachment next year.

* * *

So where's the dividing line between legitimate dissent and treasonous action? When a group of military and police officers took advantage of last February's 20th Edsa anniversary rally and sought to convert it into a coup attempt against the government, that action falls under treason, a very serious crime. Armed officers of the law are especially vulnerable because they are sworn to uphold and protect the government and they are provided with weapons to do so; hence, using those arms against the government is a most serious crime.

Marine Col. Ariel Querubin, who figured in past coup attempts, has now taken a different tack. He has publicly said he was merely withdrawing support from the government to show sympathy for his relieved senior officer, Marine Commandant Brig. Gen. Renato Miranda, and that he doesn't espouse violence or use of force. This is a flawed argument. Querubin knows there is a right way to air dissatisfaction in the Armed Forces, but his public announcement of withdrawal of support from government cannot be allowed. As a military officer, he took an oath to protect and defend the government, and if he can no longer do so, his option is to resign (we have a volunteer Armed Forces). Then he can join protest movements all he wants.

* * *

We interviewed the director general of the Philippine Economic Zone Authority, Lilia de Lima, on dzRH right after she was decorated with the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver category, by the Emperor of Japan through Ambassador Ryuichiro Yamazaki. We learned from her about many businesses in the Philippines that perhaps many of us don't know about. For instance, she recently visited a small office in Metro Manila where the very yuppy-looking personnel, mostly young people in jeans and T-shirts, some young guys even wearing earrings, seemed to just laze around. De Lima learned that these are global knowledge workers considered among the most competent IT people in the world. Their job is to trouble-shoot computer systems anywhere in the world within nine hours! *Kahanga-hanga talaga sila, ang gagaling,* she said.

She warned, however, that businesses engaged in IT, such as call centers, medical and legal transcriptions, animation, etc., ought to be careful about pirating talents from one another, as this tends to jack up the hiring fees and results in RP pricing itself out of the international IT market. Luckily, she said, IT businesses here seem to appreciate this problem, and they have formed an association against piracy.

* * *

What makes foreign companies prize Filipinos? De Lima said foreigners appreciate most our workers' literacy and English skills as well as the fact that they're easy to train, hardworking and very friendly and cooperative. Pinoys also have a very fast learning curve, taking only eight weeks to learn, compared to 16 to 24 weeks for workers in other countries. What's also good is that Peza zones have been moving away from Metro Manila to the provinces, such as Mindanao. There's now one techno-park in Davao Oriental and one in Cagayan de Oro. In Hassan, Misamis Oriental, there's Pilipinas Kao, which makes use of coconut components. Diverting industries from congested Central Luzon and Southern Tagalog areas would necessitate better infrastructure elsewhere, but it is well worth the investment since Peza zones create more jobs and support businesses.

DNA on soiled panties and condoms

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

IN THE NEWS THESE PAST DAYS WERE THE items related to the alleged rape case that involved Filipino complainant-victim "Nicole" and the four accused US Marines. Forensic analyst Dr. Francisco Supe Jr. of the PNP Crime Laboratory told the court that DNA was indeed present in the two pieces of evidence that he had examined.

The panty yielded male and female DNA samples, with the female DNA sample matching Nicole's. Strangely, the condom did not yield a male DNA profile. The male DNA found on the panty has yet to be matched with those of the accused, particularly DNA from Lance Corporal Daniel Smith who had used it in what the defense called "consensual sex."

In this case, a lot will depend on the material evidence. I hope this will yield lessons on how evidence should be preserved and handled with utmost care by the victims and investigators. The accused and their conspirators have all the reasons to cover their tracks.

Well, in their hurry to get back to their ship, the accused in this rape case weren't able to get rid of the condom and Nicole's panty as well.

Still, there might have been some mishandling of the vital pieces of evidence when these were turned over and this might have allowed environmental factors to damage other vital traces.

A "rape kit" would have come in handy for Nicole and the persons trying to help her immediately after the traumatic incident.

If you're a fan of the blockbuster TV show "CSI" (Crime Scene Investigation) you know that the phrase "shred of evidence" could mean a whole cache, thanks to modern science and technology. But David Caruso and his team can't do much with their high-tech lab machines and reagents if they have no crime scene samples to work on.

A rape kit could deliver those shreds of evidence, microscopic though they may be. The kit could give an idea of the crime scene and the profiles of the guilty. A rape kit is light, handy, cheap and easy to use. It's all in one big envelope.

Rape kits should be available to as many individuals and agencies in the helping profession as possible. Rape kits could spell the difference between justice and no justice and could lead to the speedy crime resolution for the victims, the guilty and the innocent as well.

The DNA Analysis Laboratory of the Natural Sciences Institute of the University of the Philippines is working to make these kits available. Multi-awarded molecular microbiologist Dr. Ma. Corazon A. De Ungria and her team had worked on the project "Incorporating DNA Evidence in the Resolution of Sexual Assault Cases in the Philippines" and won a funding grant for this two years ago.

UP's DNA lab can now implement what it had proposed: validate a prototype investigation kit, establish an integrated system for rape investigations and storage of evidence, and train the lawyers/judiciary on the proper interpretation of forensic DNA evidence in the courtroom.

Yes, science moves faster than jurisprudence and there's a lot that judges and criminal lawyers could learn from the nerdy lab techies.

With the advent of forensic DNA technology as a powerful investigative tool in the prompt resolution of criminal cases, there is a need to develop an efficient and secure system for the collection, analysis and storage of biological evidence. Rape kits form part of this technology.

A rape kit consists of several collection tubes with caps in different colors, cotton swabs for collecting samples from different parts of the victim's body (vagina, external genitalia, anus, mouth and throat), small envelopes for the collection tubes, instructions on how to gather samples, preserve, pack, seal, preserve (at what temperature, etc.) and transport.

Also included are a sexual assault case history sheet to be filled up and signed by the interviewer and medical examiner, and a check list of the samples collected to be signed by the health practitioner who collected the samples. Pieces of clothing (like underwear) that might contain samples should be included, too.

If you don't have a rape kit, clip this column and note the items that you must have and make one.

The "chain of custody" is very important. The samples collected should land in the right hands and agencies. UP's DNA lab has a working partnership with the Child Protection Unit of the UP-Philippine General Hospital which assists women and children victims of sexual abuse. The UP-PGH-CPU and selected CPU units have been testing the prototype kits.

Samples should be gathered immediately and preferably before the victim washes her or his genital or anal area so that the semen of the rapist/s can be collected.

Some of the institutions in the country with DNA testing labs are the National Bureau of Investigation, the Philippine National Police, St. Luke's Medical Center and UP.

UP-NSRI does forensic research and accepts civil, criminal and disaster cases as part of its extension work. Its personnel readily testify in court.

The American Academy of Forensic Science defines forensic science as "the application of scientific principles and technological practices to the purposes of justice in the study and resolution of criminal cases and regulatory issues."

A person's DNA profile serves as a DNA print that may be used to identify a person and trace his or her activities. New technologies are capable of analyzing even minute amounts of crime scene evidence, hence the immense impact of DNA technology in forensic investigations.

* * *

Send feedback to cerespd@info.com.ph

Blessed like Franco

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

LAST WEEK, TELEVISION JOURNALIST RICKY Carandang reproduced in his blog (www.rickycarandang.com) a letter sent by Bishop Emeritus (meaning, retired) Nicholas Mondejar of San Carlos, Negros Occidental, to his brother bishops during the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines meeting. It is both a startling and unsurprising document.

Personally, what I found intriguing was Mondejar's extensive quotation from the late Redemptorist priest Bernard Haring:

"Once a usurper has actually obtained firm control of power in the state, the legitimate authority previously in control is not allowed to resort to violent measure to regain power unless there is a well-founded hope of success and true furtherance of the common good. The mere personal or ancestral claims to authority must ultimately cede to considerations of the welfare of the people as a whole. The common good—in its broadest aspects—is also the decisive factor, the standard by which the people themselves should judge whether to accept the regime of the usurper or not."

I had to do some reading up on the controversial priest, Haring. Apparently his book "The Law of Christ" represents a specific (though influential) point in his evolution, intellectually. And while he has his supporters, apparently from a mainstream Catholic point of view, Haring is considered doctrinally suspect today. He was highly critical, for example, of Pope Paul VI's encyclical on family planning, "Humanae Vitae."

Lavinia Byrne, in 1999 (http://www.laviniabyrne.co.uk/haring_lecture.htm), wrote this summation of Haring and his views: "After Hitler, after the Holocaust, moral theology could never be the same again and Haring was one of the people who seized the opportunity provided by the moment. So this farmer's son, who entered the Redemptorists and studied extensively in Rome, where he then taught from 1950-1986, became the leading moral theologian in the Catholic Church at the time of the Second Vatican Council."

Byrne quoted in turn Dr. Eloise Rosenblatt of Berkeley's Theological Union who reminisced about having Haring as a teacher. "I had Bernard Haring in the mid-1970s," Rosenblatt wrote, "[and] how charming and genial was his theology of a kindly God, whose sacramental presence through Jesus was orientated to grace, wholeness, not sin or human inadequacy… Having suffered the violence of war, he did not use teaching to conquer others theologically; he made no war on anyone's soul in the name of God. This spirit was different from what would have been the triumphalist air of theology prior to Vatican II, the period in which he was taught. So how is it, I wonder, that he unlearned what he was taught, and taught what he had not learned?"

Byrne said Haring represented something significant in the Catholic imagination: "Here was a man who grew up under one system and went on to do the theological thinking that would produce another and quite radically different one." Indeed, a quote from Haring himself explains what he set out to do and why he ended up being viewed as a kind of rebel: "What most influenced my thinking about moral theology was the mindless and criminal obedience of Christians to Hitler, a madman and a tyrant. This led me to the conviction that the character of a Christian must not be formed one-sidedly by a leitmotif of obedience but rather by a discerning responsibility, a capacity to respond courageously to new values and new needs, and a readiness to take the risk."

As Byrne explained it, Haring evolved (but apparently not everyone who read him did). "The earlier Haring, as indicated by the title of 'The Law of Christ,' still saw law as the primary model of the Christian life. But in 1978, his new three-volume moral theology, written this time in English, was titled 'Free and Faithful in Christ,' which indicates the move to a more relational model for the moral life and the rejection of a legal model."

From what I understand of Haring and his writings, his being appalled over how an instinct for obedience cowed Catholics during the Nazi era in his home country, Germany, speaks strongly to us today: we can either be the Mondejars of this world, embracing and justifying the government with a fervor matching Spanish prelates blessing the despotic Generalissimo Francisco Franco. Or we can be willing to be at odds with authority, in the quest to find ways to free one's conscience.

For example, the extract above is a reflection on a dilemma faced by occupied peoples everywhere, and the citizens of a state run by a dictatorship: Would disobedience, or rebellion, if engaged in only by a tiny minority, accomplish anything more than the quicker extermination of opposition, and even greater repression?

The resistance to the Japanese was subject to the same debate: Attack the Imperial Japanese forces all the time, everywhere, regardless of reprisals, or hold back, gathering only intelligence in preparation for the final offensive against the enemy? In France, the same debate took place. In the German context, a similar debate took place over whether to resist Hitler and mount a coup to topple him.

Haring was not against resisting authority; he wanted to ensure that resistance, even to tyranny, should remain non-violent. I don't think he ever meant to have his words used to justify governments that are devoid of legitimacy.

And I tend not to have much patience for people who quote St. Paul to justify total obedience to governments. After all, St. Paul was executed for defying the state, though he was given the privilege, as a Roman citizen, of being beheaded and not crucified. Which I think is the larger lesson when it comes to state power, any state power and people of faith: the state will have the nasty habit of insisting you suffer for your religion.

Just hate it

YOUNG BLOOD

Richard Allan S. Aquino

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I HAVE NEVER LIKED SPORTS. AS A CHILD, I ALWAYS wanted to stay indoors and just read the Encyclopedia or Archie comics or watch television (skipping the sports channels) or listen to AM radio programs that my grandmother loved. There were just too many elements in sports that did not sit well with me. Sure, I enjoyed playing traditional children's games like *patintero* or hide-and-seek, but my interests didn't cross over from kiddie challenges to basketball or football or other real sports.

There was a time in my childhood when baseball and basketball cards were extremely popular among kids. They had hundreds of them, and they cost a lot. The kids protected them like ancient documents, neatly organized in their special books with small plastic slips, which they brought everywhere they went as if it were the Bible. To me, it all seemed like a waste of money and effort. But then it was a passion for them, just as it was a passion for me to avoid sports.

When I was in third grade, I was stunned when our teacher told the class that we needed to go out and play in the field. He was carrying a bag that contained basketballs, volleyballs, dart boards and ping-pong equipment. All my classmates cheered as they rushed to help him carry the stuff. I was appalled. I had always thought that Physical Education in grade school would consist of lessons in nutrition and little morning exercises. How did my classmates know how to shoot that basket or spike that volleyball? Feeling betrayed, I just sat in a corner in my neat PE uniform and watched the sweaty little brats dribble a sticky, gummy, orange globe.

When the school year ended, my parents sent me and my siblings to a summer camp. It was the first time for me to go and I was excited. But the excitement abruptly faded when the camp counselors told us about the three-day program: There would be competitions: in swimming, running and hiking (five miles in the woods one way), among other horrible things. We had to rough it and we were supposed to participate in those ghastly activities. There was a conflict of interest for me, and happily that was the last time I was sent to that camp.

High school was different. There were no more third grade co-ed PE sessions where I could sit out the games. I had to participate. All the guys were asked to sign up for at least one sport during the annual intramurals. After all those years of abhorring sports, I was forced to pretend to act sporty. It was like an attack on my personal tradition!

But as an honor student, I knew I had to participate to get a grade of 85 percent in PE. There were terms when my adviser would be so unhappy because I couldn't even get third honors, because of my PE grade. But then two out of four quarters in the academic year were usually devoted to sports theories only, and I would then receive 94 percent. There was even a time when I knew the rules and the history of a number of sports, like basketball, badminton and volleyball, better than my classmates who played them. My teacher noticed this, and he assigned me as a referee or judge (or sometimes just to run after stray balls). But he wasn't contented with this; he still wanted me to like sports.

In all of my four years of high school intramural games, I ended up signing for volleyball even though I was afraid to be hit on the face (which happened on several occasions). I was always benched after opening my team's games with 2 to 5 serves, where I would always score at least 2 points because the opposing team couldn't predict where the ball would land. But as a sign of protest, I borrowed the "Just do it" check sign and inverted it to signify "Just hate it" and paint it on my left thumbnail with a black sign pen.

When I got to college, I stopped painting my nails, but my personal crusade continued. Twice I was reprimanded by my volleyball teacher. I could understand why the first time it happened, since I did not do well in the exercises. But the second time, she threatened to give me a failing grade because I misspelled her "famous" nickname. That was unacceptable, so I showed her that I could play her game, and I passed.

In the following semesters, I wanted to enroll in less strenuous gym classes but strangely the Philippines Games class was always full (probably filled with my fellow crusaders). So I enrolled in duck-pin bowling, physical fitness theories, and isometric stretching. And all those years I used my only pair of high-end cross-trainers that I had bought in third year high school.

While I appreciate the values players hope to learn from sports—like wellness, teamwork, determination, patience, discipline, honesty, conquering one's weaknesses, and that vague concept called "sportsmanship"—I believe I can learn those things elsewhere, and I have. I am happy I didn't grow up away from loved ones because of training, only to end up with broken bones and dreams. And I haven't become one of those sports fanatics—or players—who go home with stitches caused by riots in sports events. But hey, I thought sports are meant to teach values.

Perhaps the one sport that I hate to see most is golf. Whenever I see players hit that golf ball, only to walk hundreds of meters to where it landed so they can hit it farther, I smirk. Why hit that ball in the first place?

Boxing? It's way too violent for the pacifist in me. And I don't even want to get started on those "extreme sports." I saw someone on TV who attempted to raise it to the next level and ended up with broken body parts. When the guy tried to explain why he did it, somebody told him, "That's not sports, that's stupid."

All this doesn't mean I don't like being active. I love swimming, but only as a recreation to be enjoyed with loved ones, and not to be endured with panic and frustration as in a competition. I walk a lot (and you would, too, if like me you studied in the UP Diliman campus or you worked in Eastwood and had to walk the entire length of Araneta Center every day to get to the bus stop). Although I'm not athletic, I am not a lazy lamppost because I don't have any sports.

Those board games I won or lost with my family and classmates? That's bonding. Those euphoric neighborhood challenges that I used to play with my friends? That's recreation. The spectacular Olympics opening ceremonies? That's entertainment. Cheerleaders dancing and chanting witty verses? That's poetry. Sports? That's a pain.

Richard Allan S. Aquino, 25, is a BA European Languages graduate of the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

Take pride in Filipino values

Blue eyes, blonde hair... That is beauty.

Gucci, Guess, Dolce and Gabanna... That is being classy.

BMW, Ford, GMC... Hot wheels.

Dollars... That is the new Philippine peso.

American... That is the new Filipino.

BASICALLY, WE DESIRE TO BE Americans. That's why every Filipino parent prepares a grand fiesta when a daughter is engaged to a foreigner. Imported products fill the stores. Even the old value of virginity has been thrown into the dustbin because we follow the American culture.

It's not that I hate Americans. My point is that their identity is not ours. They are Americans. We are Filipinos. We may have been once their colony, but we are still not them. We will never be them. National identity cannot be changed; if we insist on changing it, we will only end up frustrated.

We should instead appreciate being Filipino. There burns a fire in us that no other nation has. We just don't see it that much.

As far as I can see, we are the most resourceful race. When it seems we've reached the end of the road, we still find a way. It is only in the Philippines that midwives can turn the transverse lie of a baby into cephalic position so the mother can deliver normally. In the United States, such a case would automatically call for caesarean section.

Unlike in the United States, respect for our elders stands as the norm of our society. Here, answering parents when being corrected spells downright catastrophe. Even our superstitions warn against disrespect for elders. High school life in our country is not as traumatic as it is in the United States because we respect the authorities. As a result, we become more psychologically stable individuals than the Americans.

Filipino families are usually solid support systems, unlike in other nations. We stand together from one economic crisis to the next. Because we are able to unload our stress to our family, we have better levels of sanity than the Americans. Family members are so intimate with each other that siblings know each other's secrets and borrow one another's things. In our society, the problem of one becomes the problem of the whole family and even of the relatives. For us, our families are the fuel for our dreams. We want to catch the stars for those we love. Well, that is one noble thing in us worth admiring.

A people born into the nothingness of poverty, yet continuing to strive to be something for our families; a nation that respects the wisdom of the old in order to inspire the new generation, a race that amid deprivation produces a solution. That is the cream in Filipinos when unwrapped. So, before we ever desire to be Americans, think: Are resourcefulness, respect and family unity not worth the pride of being Filipinos?

—MARIE FRANZ JERUTA,
mariefranzjeruta@yahoo.com

Why the books were destroyed

I AM WRITING TO EXPRESS MY dismay with Lito Zulueta's article criticizing the Netanya Jimenez Foundation. (PDI-Lifestyle, 6/25/06)

It is important for my family to preserve our good reputation. My daughter's name is behind the foundation which we set up in memory of my mother. It was unfair for Zulueta not to give our side a chance to explain the destruction of the books.

His article portrayed us as dictatorial and suggested that people who burn books deserve to burn.

The books were shredded, not burned. They were destroyed because they were filled with grammatical errors and misspelled words. Even the name of our foundation was not properly stated. We were also upset that the author included in the book some photos of mine, without our approval. And the book was printed before our foundation, as publisher of the book, had the chance to review it in its entirety.

It was the author of the book who directed the printer to go ahead with its production. The printer should have waited for the go-signal to print the book from its publisher.

—JOSEPHINE JIMENEZ,
president,
Netanya Jimenez
Foundation Inc.

Rod. Paras-Perez, the editor of the book, said the book was recalled because the publisher disagreed with the editorial focus, not because of typo errors. The article stated that copies of the book were destroyed by shredding. The word "burned" was enclosed in quotation marks exactly to indicate that its use was metaphorical; shredding is today what burning was yesterday. And the article did not call for the burning of people who burn books. It cited criticisms of book-burning across the ages as a form of totalitarianism so that those who burn books today may burn writers later.

—LITO B. ZULUETA

Will the Church do a Buffett?

IT MAKES ONE WONDER IF THE Catholic Church, with its vast tax-free wealth accumulated through many centuries, would be willing to match even if only half of the humanity and generosity of Warren Buffett's $37.4 billion donation, through Bill Gates' foundation, for the poor, especially in Third World countries.

—VICTOR MURILLO,
658 Maharlika St.,
Plainview 1150,
Mandaluyong City

Let's keep present school schedule

WAY BACK WHEN ALEJANDRO Roces was the education secretary, students of my school (Roxas High or Manila High) were asked to proceed to the Department of Education on Arroceros Street for some important announcement.

There the students and teachers milled around like sheep, until somebody (a higher-up most probably) appeared on a balcony and said something that sent the crowd roaring.

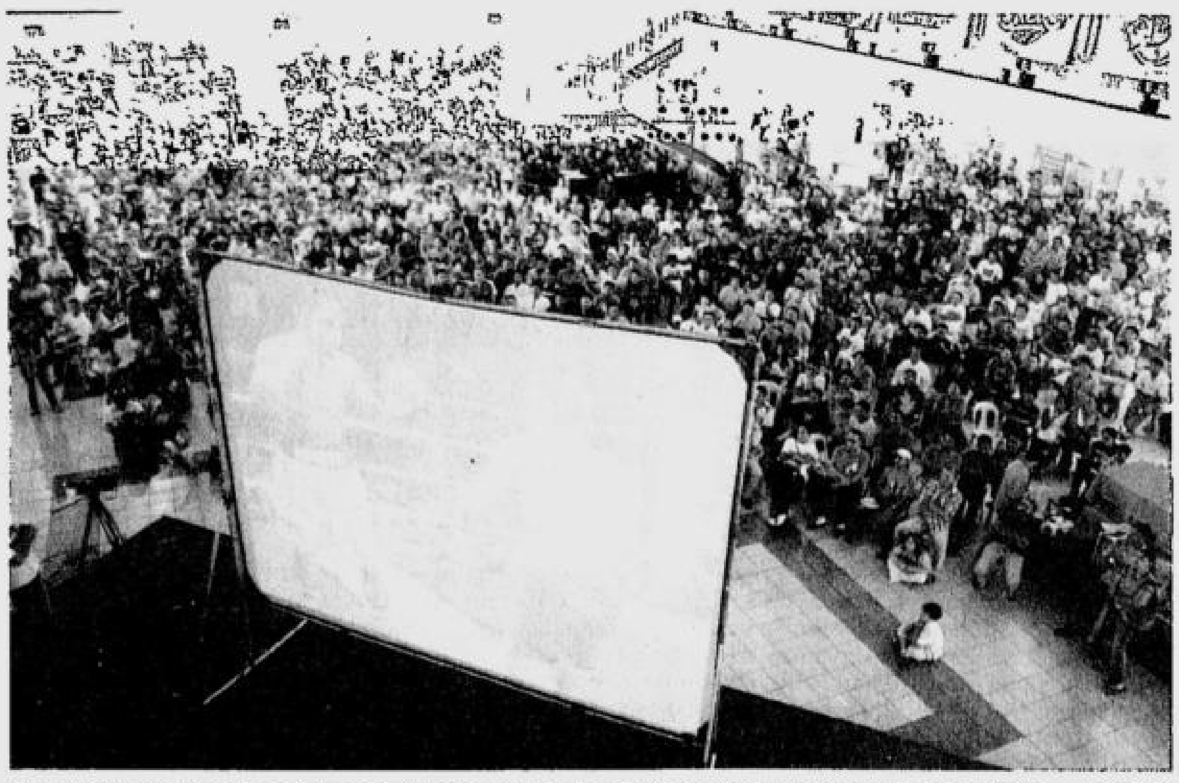
The following morning a photo appeared in the papers, with a caption saying that students and teachers trooped to the department to show their support of the plan to move the school year opening to September. That was the first we heard of the plan.

Last July 14, the newspapers reported that Sen. Manny Villar had sponsored a bill seeking to move the school opening to September—again. Perhaps the senators don't have school-age children who don't want to spend their summers cooped up in cramped, stuffy rooms when they should be out climbing trees or otherwise enjoying summer.

All this talk of suspension of classes due to the inclement weather is a lot of baloney. Even in the United States, where summers are for fun, schools are closed when the weather turns ugly—during winter storms and blizzards.

Leave the school year as it is!

—EUFEMIA C. ESTRADA



A HUGE crowd watches a telecast of the Pacquaio-Larios fight at the NCCC mall in Davao City. PDI PHOTO

Can't they show Pacquaio fight live on television?

MANNY PACQUIAO, AN AWEsome Filipino southpaw, defended his super featherweight title once again, knocking down tough Mexican boxer Oscar Larios in front of his home crowd inside the jam-packed Araneta Coliseum.

What a spectacle for those who could get a ticket to the Araneta Coliseum or for those who were willing to pay P300 to watch it live in selected SM cinemas. But alas for millions of other Filipinos wanting to cheer on their champion, they were deprived of the luxury of watching the fight live, despite the fact that the fight was held in their own country. Totally pathetic!

If this were in any other country in the world, giant screens would have been put up out in the streets for all to watch (for free!) and support their local hero. But what did we do? We had to delay the showing of the fight on TV to the point that a local news cable channel was interviewing Pacquiao on his win and the fight had not even begun on TV.

People living outside the Philippines were telling us, informing us that Pacquiao had won, while we were all excitedly waiting for the fight to start, watching more than 100 TV commercials. If I am not mistaken, the so-called "live" telecast started around 10 a.m. and lasted until around 3 p.m. I also read in a local paper that in San Fernando, ABS-CBN set up a big screen for public viewing, but it had to keep the enthusiasm of the audience (who were irked by the delay and all the TV commercials) up by holding games like arm-wrestling and giving away free drinks and candies. Pitiful!

If I were Pacquiao, I would be furious as well. How could anyone have the nerve to do this to us? It's insulting! This is about national pride, one of the rare opportunities for our people to bond together. In fact, this is an issue that even President Macapagal-Arroyo should get involved in.

And we all know this isn't the first time it happened. Neither will it be the last. We had an average of 3-4 minutes of TV commercials per round in his last fight. What is wrong with us? Someone please tell me. We are in a very sad state, we're going backwards. I am so upset, I am so sorry.

As a parting note, let us all prepare for the upcoming Manny Pacquiao-Erik Morales rubber match set for Nov. 18 this year at the Thomas and Mack Center in Las Vegas. Let's brace ourselves for another "delayed, TV commercial-loaded, live event."

Wow Philippines!

—SUNNY HERMANO,
smhermano@yahoo.com

High water bill traced to substitute meter reader

IN REFERENCE TO NEAL CRUZ'S column of July 12, we would like to assure Fernando Sena and the public that we are not overcharging our customers.

Sena's complaint about an excessive bill arose from a mistake committed by a substitute meter reader who had taken the place of the regular meter reader. The former did not know that Sena's meter is located inside the walled compound and, having seen only the connection leading to the house, he concluded that the meter had been stolen. Subsequently, he entered a "stolen meter" code in Sena's bill.

In cases like this, when the meter is recorded as stolen (and thus there is no reading), our computerized billing program automatically generates an average estimate. In Sena's case, the program estimated his average consumption for the billing period June 6 to July 6 at 63 cubic meters and thus billed him P1,562.34.

With the discovery of the erroneous "stolen meter" notation, Sena's consumption will be determined by an actual reading of the meter and the bill in question will be revised. His actual consumption will be reflected in his July to August billing. Any overpayment will be deducted from his next bill.

To facilitate the reading of the meter, we have requested him to relocate it outside of his perimeter wall and he agreed.

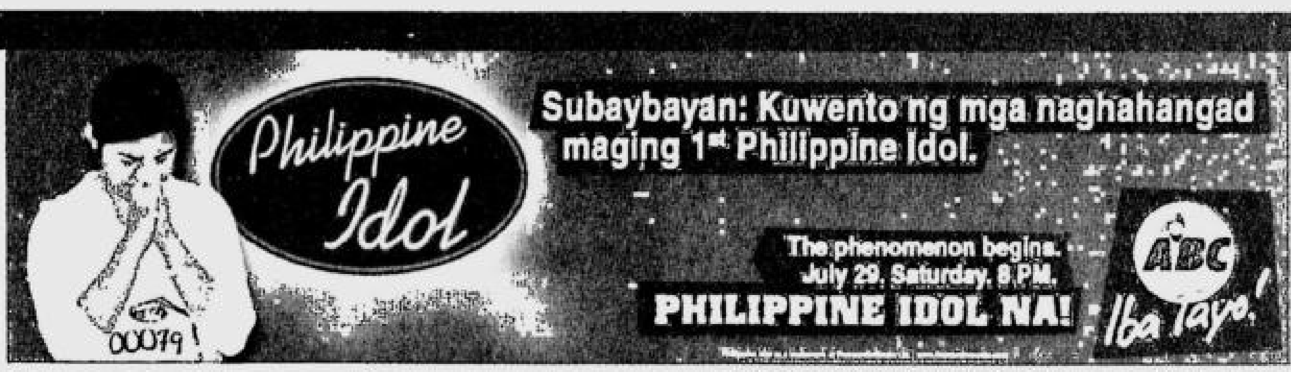
We would like to take this opportunity to assure our customers that we are putting in place safeguards against erroneous application of the average billing. These include a policy not to allow a customer's account to have more than two months of average billing. If this happens, our zone head conducts an investigation and any mistaken application of the "stolen meter" code or any other error is eventually discovered. Thus, the proper reading can be made and billing mistakes are rectified.

We apologize for the inconvenience caused to Sena, and we thank you for the opportunity to explain our side.

—JESUS MATUBIS JR.,
manager,
Corporate Communications,
Maynilad Water Services Inc.,

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE



Philippine Idol
Subaybayan: Kuwento ng mga naghahangad maging 1st Philippine Idol.
The phenomenon begins. July 29, Saturday, 8 PM.
PHILIPPINE IDOL NA!
ABC
Iba Tayo!
00079

ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5				National Geographic	V League				Sentro	Worst Case Scenario	S.O.S		Wala Yan Sa Lolo Ko		Big News	Dokyu			
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema			Pasion de Amor	Little Amy	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Calla Lily	TV Patrol World		Kapamilya Deal Or No Deal	Bituing Walang Ningning	Sa Piling Mo	My Girl		A Love To Kill		Bandila	
AXN		CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (Season 6)		CSI: Miami (Season 3)		30 Seconds To Fame	Samsung Sports World	Amazon		The Amazing Race 6		Fear Factor (Season VI)		The Contender (Season II)		Supernatural (Season I)		Hex (Season 2)	
Cartoon Network	Pixie And Dixie	All New Popeye Show	Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Winx Club	Xiaolin Showdown	Codename: Kids Next Door	Foster's Home For Imaginary Friends	The Simpsons	Samurai Jack	PokeMon	Dico	Gundam Seed Destiny	The Simpsons	Teen Titans	Justice League	The Batman	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock
Cinema One		John & Marsha				Mangarap Ka				Beautiful Boxer				Tugatog				Diskarte	
Cinemax				The Blues Brothers (3:35 PM)				S.W.A.T				Battlestar Galactica Mission 5			[illegible] Lives (9:25PM)			Killing Time (11:05PM)	
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia	Global Challenges	Your World Today			
Crime/Suspense		Law & Order: Criminal Content		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Profiler		Forensic Files	Psychic Detectives	Law & Order		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Cold Case				E-Ring	
Discovery Channel		Psychic Witness		Building The Biggest		Raw Nature		Deadliest Season In The World		We Built This City		IBM Innovation Hour		Mythbusters		Building The Biggest		Power Zone	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Untalkative Bunny	Suite Life Of Zack And Cody	Lilo & Stitch	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			Tutenstein	Lizzie Mcguire	Kim Possible	Totally Spies	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN				The Open Championships 2006 1st rd								Germany Tonight		Sportscenter Asia	The Open Championships 2006 1st rd				Sportscenter Asia
ETC		American Dreams 3		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Will & Grace 4	Friends 10	Queer Eye For The Straight Guy		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Starting Over		The Maury Povich Show		The Jerry Springer Show		Dr. Phil		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition	The Ellen Show		Wheel Of Fortune	Jeopardy	Showdog Moms & Dads		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition
EWTN	Cenacle Of Divine Mercy	Chaplet Of Mercy/ Angelus	Virtue Storybook	Truth In The Heart	Rosary With Mother Angelica	EWTN Gallery	The Sacraments Through The Ages	Special Programming		EWTN Live (Encore) With Fr. Mitch Pacwa		Daily Mass		Holy Land Rosary/ Angelus	The Seven Sacraments	Images of Mary	Behold the Man: Spirituality for Men	The Journey Home Encore	
Fox News		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Fox & Friends						Fox News Live					
GMA 7	Agawin Mo Man Ang Lahat	Now and Forever (3:15 PM)	Ang Pagbabago (3:45 PM)		Saiyuki	Dragonball Z	Jewel In The Palace	24 Oras		Captain Barbell (7:10 PM)		Majika		I Luv NY (8:50 PM)	Love Of The Condor Heroes	Magpakailanman			Saksi
Hallmark Channel		Strong Medicine (3:15 PM)		Homeless To Harvard				McLeod's Daughters		Strong Medicine		Missing I		Spooks		Dinotopia: The Outsider			Spooks (11:45PM)
HBO	White Water Summer			Falling In Love			The Winning Season				The Perfect Score			The Cable Guy			Honey (10:25PM)		
Hero TV	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	D.I.C.E.	Super Gals	Shadow OF The Elves	Mission Odyssey	Rune Soldier	Beyblade G-Revolution	Yu-Gi-Oh GX	Naruto	Mirmo de Pon	Inuyasha	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	D.I.C.E	Super Gals	Mission Odyssey
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		EBC Earth Files		Japan Video Topics/ Arnis		Travel Philippines	Japan Video Topics/ Arnis	EBC Earth Files	IBC News Tonite	Home Shopping Network	
JackTV	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	The Late Show David Letterman		Smackdown				JLU	Just For Laughs (Gags)	Mad TV		That 70s Show	Everybody Hates Chris	The Late Show David Letterman		The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Comedy Central Presents	South Park	The Man Show
Lifestyle Network	Get Color	30 Minute Meals	Wolfgang Puck	Sweet Dreams	Smart Solutions	Sensible Chic	At Home With	Barefoot Contessa	Everyday Italian	Food 911	Who's Wedding Is It Anyway?		Good Finds	Martha		Your Private Island	Genuine Article	E! True Hollywood Story	
MTV Philippines		Punk'D	Laguna Beach	Handpicked Kamikazee	MTV Hits					Get Spotted	Ultrasound Kamikazee	TRL		Punk'D	Laguna Beach	Rex in the City	Sessions Kamikazee	MTV Hits	Rockola
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYX News	MYX Firsts	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		MYX Presents		MYX Bandarito	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXILOG
National Geographic	Wildlife Diary	National Geographic Specials		Megastructures		Naked Science: Angry Skies		Top 5 - Amazing Moments		WOW! Blue Realm: Tentacles		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Megastructures: Berlin Train Terminal		Naked Science: Surviving Nature's Fury	
NBN		Teledyaryo Alas-Tres		Teledyaryo Sports Alap.			Diyos Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Sila?	Teledyaryo W/ Rey Langit & Angelique Lazo		Tinig ng Bayan (Live)				Teledyaryo Final Edition				Bantay OCW With Susan K	
Net 25	INC Chronicles	Convergence	Auto Motor Sport	The Planet	Tomorrow Today	Ang Tamang Daan		News Beat (Live)		Openline (Live)	Gabay Sa Kalusugan	INC Chronicles E	INC Chronicles F	Ang Pagbubunyag		World Report	Kapatid Sa Hanapbuhay	DWTV Journal News	Tomorrow Today
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	Hey Arnold!	SpongeBob SquarePants	Rocket Power	Four Eyes	SpongeBob SquarePants/ [illegible] Right On Top	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron/ My Life As A Teenage Robot	Nick Kicks/ All Grown Up		The Fairly Odd Parents	Drake & Josh	Unfabulous	Romeo	Naturally Sadie	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	The Fairly Odd Parents	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Akala Mo				Ibang Mo Man Ang Puso				Maging Sino Ka Man				Sanggano't Sanggago				Ekis
Qtv		Shaman King	Outlaw Star	Galaxy Angel	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Phoenix	Irene	Fireworks	Damo	Project 11	Family Zoo		News On Q	Women's Desk		Irene
RPN 9	TV Shopping				Kapatid Show	RPN Aksyon News		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The 4400		Medium		Invasion		Newswatch Now	Just For Laughs	Kasangga Mo Ang Langit	Police Hour
SBN 21								Sony Music Video				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Friends Again		Sony Music Video	
Solar Sports					Volleyball: China Volley Masters match 3					Philippine Bowling Congress		2006 JONES CUP				Solar Sports Desk	NBA Access	2006 Uber Cup SFinals	
Sports Plus		Cialis Western Open Highlights		Raceworld		World Poker Tour Hollywood Home				Golf Today	Nopi Tunervision	World Greatest Auto Show		World Game		Auto Focus		French Open '06 WS Final Highlights	
Star Movies		Austin Powers: International Man Of Mystery			Sudden Death (4:40PM)				Cold Mountain					The One			Shall We Dance (Movie)		
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Monk		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Seinfeld	Rockstar: Supernova		The Office (US Version)	Arrested Development	The Drew Carey Show	Less Than Perfect	Seinfeld	Rockstar: Supernova
Studio 23				PBL Game 2				Spirits	Blog	Wazzup Wazzup	Two And A Half Men		Joey (8:20 PM)	Grey's Anatomy (9:10 PM)		News Central	Oprah		Reality World

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

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(All in exact order)
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Across the NATION

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War on Reds focuses on 4 provinces

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—SIX WEEKS SINCE launching a heightened counter-insurgency campaign in Central Luzon, the military this week has begun focusing on four provinces where the presence of communist armies are still felt.

The concentration of combat and civic operations, as well as education drive, will be in Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga and Tarlac, according to Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, commander of the 7th Infantry Division.

"Events will dictate the tempo. *Hanggang kaya, sasagarin namin* (But as long as we can manage, we will do this on full hilt)," said Palparan.

He said the scaled-down target is due in part to his retirement on Sept. 11.

The decision was largely based on what the troops had accomplished since their deployment to more than 100 urban and rural villages—an approach that had not been done in the region since after the martial law years.

Cleared areas

In the Army's assessment, the following areas have already been cleared of communist rebels: Gapan City, Peñaranda and General Tinio towns in Nueva Ecija; Angeles and San Fernando cities, Mexico and Lubao towns in Pampanga; San Ildefonso and San Miguel towns in Bulacan; and Sta. Ignacia in Tarlac.

Barangay defense councils have been established in those areas and these will help sustain the peace that government forces have restored there, Palparan said.

He said the coastal towns in Bulacan—Calumpit, Hagonoy, Paombong, Bulacan and Obando—remained "problem areas."

Units of New People's Army and the breakaway Rebolusyonaryong Hukbong Bayan there continued to be pursued, he said.

Palparan blamed the NPA in last Sunday's killing of First Lt. Paul Fortuny, the fourth soldier slain in Bulacan since 2005.

He said the military remained alert on the activities of small bands of guerrillas in Aurora, Bataan and Zambales.

No retirement

He said he was reluctant to retire, adding he wanted to go on helping in the government's new two-year deadline in defeating insurgency.

If granted an extension, he said he could best serve in a position that would give his office complete control of resources in fighting the enemy.

The last six weeks saw at least 11 incidents of killings, abductions, illegal arrests and interrogation of activists and civilians, reports gathered by the INQUIRER showed.

Two farmers have been killed in Pampanga and Nueva Ecija. Two University of the Philippines students and a farmer in Bulacan have remained missing since June 26.

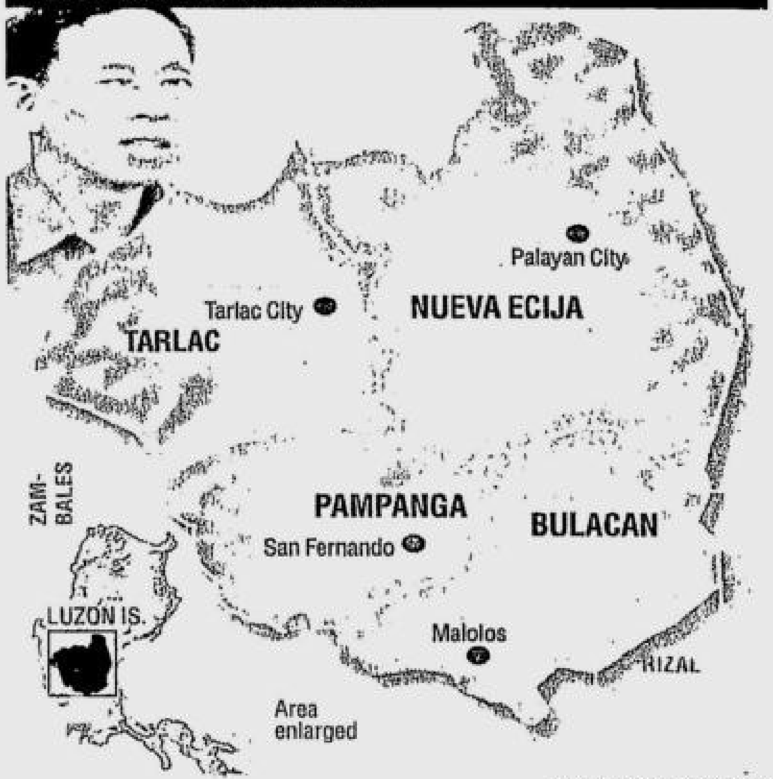
Piston national council leader Emerlito Lipio has been missing since soldiers and policemen arrested him and six other men on July 3.

Palparan has been blamed for the series of summary executions and abductions of members of militant Leftist groups, but Palparan denied a direct hand in these cases.

The killings of militants continue as the government wages an all-out war on communist guerrillas, vowing to wipe them out in two years.

This campaign raised fears of human rights abuses similar to those committed under the regime of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos during which thousands had been detained without charges and hundreds had been summarily killed. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

ANTI-RED CAMPAIGN



INQ MAP: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Trial of town mayor in publisher's slay moved to Manila

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—The trial of a mayor and three other men charged with the murder of a publisher in May 2005 will be moved to Manila, some 400 km from Baler, Aurora, where the hearings began on June 27.

The Supreme Court's third division approved the transfer of the venue in a resolution on July 17.

Rosebelle Cruz, the daughter of slain Starline Times Recorder publisher Philip Agustin, sought the change of venue, citing "grave danger" to her life as a complainant and to 15 witnesses as well.

The High Court also noted the motion for the special raffle of the case to any branch of the regional trial court in Manila.

Charged were Mayor Jaime Ylarde of Dingalan, Aurora, and suspected gunmen Reynaldo and Nilo Morete and Manuel Alday.

Ylarde is detained at the provincial jail in Baler. Reynaldo Morete, who turned witness, is in the custody of the Department of Justice. Nilo Morete and Alday remained at large.

The tribunal also ordered the clerk of RTC Branch 66 in Baler to forward the records of the case to the executive judge of the RTC in Manila.

It also authorized and directed the new judge to hear and decide the case with "deliberate dispatch."

Ylarde will also be detained in Manila during the continuation of the trial, according to Nestor Lazaro, Cruz's lawyer.

The resolution of the Supreme Court came out on the same day Baler Judge Armando Yanga denied the urgent motion of Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño and four prosecutors to inhibit him from the trial and to suspend it due to alleged bias for the accused.

Yanga received the tribunal's order on Tuesday and said he would stop hearing the case.

The Agustin murder case has so far been one of the few cases that progressed in court. At least 106 Filipino journalists have been killed since 1986. Of these, 45 have been killed since 2001. The latest victim was radio commentator Armando Pace, who was gunned down in Digos City on Tuesday.

Agustin was gunned down in his daughter's house on May 10, 2005, shortly after he arrived to deliver the special edition of his news weekly. It featured reports on Ylarde's alleged misuse of funds intended for emergency assistance and resettlement of victims displaced by the landslides in late 2004. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

STL repacked to operate like 'jueteng' for more bets

CAMP OLIVAS, PAMPANGA—THE illegal numbers game "jueteng" and the state-sanctioned small town lottery (STL) are like identical twins now.

This happened as STL license holders redesigned the game, hewing it closer to the features of underground lottery by trimming down the choices for a pair of numbers from 1-40 to 1-38. In jueteng, bettors can pick any pair from 1 to 37.

Romualdo Quiñones, STL project manager of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office in Manila, said STL operators in Quezon and Bataan introduced the change last week to fight jueteng, which he confirmed to be still competing with the STL.

"People are used to betting on 1 to 37," Quiñones said in a phone interview on Wednesday.

The aim of making STL similar to jueteng was to draw more bettors, he said.

"The risk of giving more winnings is high when you lower the number choices from 1 to 38, but operators think they could offset this by drawing more bets," he said.

Quiñones said the PCSO board approved the new set of numbers based on the endorsements of local councils. In Quezon, it was the province's league of mayors that endorsed the proposal of Pirouette Corp.

The 1-38 set will be what Green Two Corp. will use when it begins STL operations in Nueva Ecija on July 20, he said.

Quiñones said Lake Tahoe Gaming and Amusement Corp. (LTGAC) in Angeles City and Diamond Gaming Corp. in Bulacan were moving to adopt the same numbers.

Suncove Corp., the STL operator in Pampanga, will also adopt the same number set when it assigns to LTGAC its license to operate, he said.

Quiñones said the Philippine National Police and the local governments should help eliminate jueteng.

"We don't want to abuse law enforcement agencies or impute anything on them but we want to combat jueteng. We need their all-out support for the STL to succeed and replace jueteng," he said.

Quoting a PCSO report, Quiñones said the lottery prize money had reached P79.3 million since Feb. 28 when at least seven licensees started operations.

Gross receipts, on the other hand, reached P151.6 million. From that amount, the PCSO received P11.5 million or 7.5 percent of the charity fund.

Cities and towns got P13.6 million in charity shares, provinces obtained P5.6 million while congressional districts took in P3.4 million. PNP shares totaled P6.8 million.

Salaries for displaced jueteng *cabo* (area managers) and *cobrador* (collectors) hired in STL centers amounted to P16.3 million, Quiñones said. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

'Spirits' invade Ilocos town school

SAN ESTEBAN, ILOCOS SUR—Classes have been disrupted at a high school here since last week after 13 students and a teacher were supposedly "possessed" by spirits.

Emilio Ayson, principal of the San Esteban National High School (SENHS), said Rosemarie Peralta, a student, had told school officials that she saw an image of a bloodied woman in the girls' toilet before a spirit possessed her on July 11.

The spirit transferred to Peralta's companion, Jungrace Sabado, and eventually to 11 other students and Gloria Pang-ag, a teacher, Ayson said.

Faith healer

School officials took the students to Elpidio Ilacad, a faith healer in Santa Maria town, who was reported to have succeeded in exorcizing the spirits.

One of the spirits, who spoke through a student who was used as a medium, told them she was raped in Santa Maria town, Ayson said.

Ayson said the incident was repeated on Monday when some of the students who were "possessed" on July 11 suffered the same experience.

On the advice of Ilacad, school officials ordered the holding of prayers and novena at the school's gymnasium every 3 p.m. The novena will end on Thursday.

Ayson said Ilacad would perform rituals and offer prayers on the school grounds on Thursday to ward off the spirits.

The principal said school activities were disrupted when some parents prevented their children from going to school after the incident. *Leoncio Balbin Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

ROSEMARIE Peralta is comforted by her father, Rodolfo, in their home in San Esteban, Ilocos Sur after she was supposedly possessed by a spirit in school. LEONCIO BALBIN/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

ROUNDUP

Farmer killed in grenade blast

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—A farmer was killed while five others were seriously hurt when a grenade that his brother-in-law brought home exploded in their house in Lian, Batangas on July 14. Police said Romulo Lopez, 37, a resident of Barangay Cumba, Lian town was killed. Wounded were the victim's daughter Mary Grace Lopez, 18; son Ronnie Lopez, 11; his son-in-law Bryan Perea, 21; his uncle Vicente Lainez, 56; and brother-in-law Rolando Lubrino. The five were rushed to the Nasugbu General Hospital for treatment. Police said the victims were in their house when Lubrino arrived at 10:30 a.m. and showed the M203 grenade he found at a nearby sugar plantation. Lubrino gave the grenade to Lopez apparently for safekeeping but it accidentally fell from Lopez's hands and exploded. He died on the spot. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

2 rob gangs strike in Quezon

LUCENA CITY—Two robbery groups struck in two towns in Quezon province on July 10, police reports said. Ten bonnet-wearing and heavily armed men held up a roadside eatery along the Maharlika Highway in Calauag town and robbed the restaurant's owner and customers of cash and valuables estimated at P248,000. The suspects escaped aboard a Hyundai Starex van but abandoned the vehicle a kilometer away from the restaurant after it fell into a ravine. An hour later, in Padre Burgos town, another group of armed men seized an Isuzu Elf truck loaded with 200 sacks of charcoal and 2,000 kg of coconut worth P30,000. A robber shot the truck driver, George Pacho, in the face. The next day, a police patrol found the abandoned truck parked in a village, with the sacks of charcoal still in the truck. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Civilians, not rebels, says NDF

LEGAZPI CITY—The two alleged New People's Army rebels killed on July 9 in an encounter with government forces in Sitio (sub-village) Kuluyan in Barangay Hubo, Pasacao, Camarines Sur were civilians, according to National Democratic Front Bicol spokesperson Greg Bañares. Military reports earlier said soldiers under the Army's 42nd Infantry Battalion engaged an undetermined number of communist rebels in a clash that led to the deaths of Julius Capin alias "Ka Freddie" and Julie Regachuelo alias "Ka Dante." Bañares said around 10 NPA rebels slept at Rechaguelo's house when the military arrived and fired their guns at them, which caused Rechaguelo and Capin's death. *Ephraim Aguilar, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Iloilo exec faces libel raps

A CONGRESSWOMAN has sued the provincial administrator of Iloilo, a political rival, for libel for implying she was involved in the alleged anomalous purchase of 1,582 cellular phones last year. Iloilo Rep. Judy Jalbuena Syjuco accused Manuel Mejorada, who has signified his intention to run against the Syjucos in 2007, of falsely linking her to the supposedly illegal transaction. In a complaint at the Quezon City prosecutor's office, Syjuco said Mejorada caused the publication of a news story that allegedly portrayed her as a "swindler and falsifier," and "destroyed her reputation." She quoted an article published in the INQUIRER, which reported that the Department of Transportation and Communication spent P6.2 million in February 2005 for the purchase of 1,582 Nokia 1100 phones for "the use of Rep. Judy Jalbuena Syjuco." In the same story, Syjuco, speaking through her lawyer, denied any irregularity in the transaction. *DJ Yap*

Pols' lots, houses face auction for unpaid taxes

DUMAGUETE CITY—PIECES of property owned by politicians are among those that will be subjected to public auction this year due to failure to pay real estate taxes, said provincial treasurer Danilo Mendez.

Mendez said some of these politicians had been delinquent for as long as 10 years with an unpaid real property tax of as much as P70,000 each.

He declined to reveal the number of politicians involved and their identities except to say that most of them were from the northern part of the province.

"They are both incumbent and former elected local government officials," Mendez said.

"They have been sent demand letters. If they will pay, it will make a big impact on our campaign to collect unpaid taxes because they are being looked up to by people as role models. If they will not pay, they will become bad influence," he added.

Auctioned off

Mendez warned that pieces of properties of these politicians would be auctioned off if they would not settle their obligation at the time the planned public auction was undertaken.

He said his office was just waiting for the Sangguniang Panlalawigan to appropriate around P200,000 for the publication of the delinquent pieces of properties that would be auctioned off and the printing of receipts for the purpose.

He said that delinquent taxpayers must settle their obligation before the public auction is held to avoid embarrassment as their names and pieces of properties will be published as required by law.

Mendez said his office decided to hold the public auction hoping to collect at least 50 percent of the more than P100 million in unpaid real property tax.

He said that if the campaign succeeds, the provincial government will be able to generate additional revenues for basic social services.

Mendez also said workers in the government should be good taxpayers to set a good example for other taxpayers. *Romy Amarado, PDI Visayas Bureau*

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INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel
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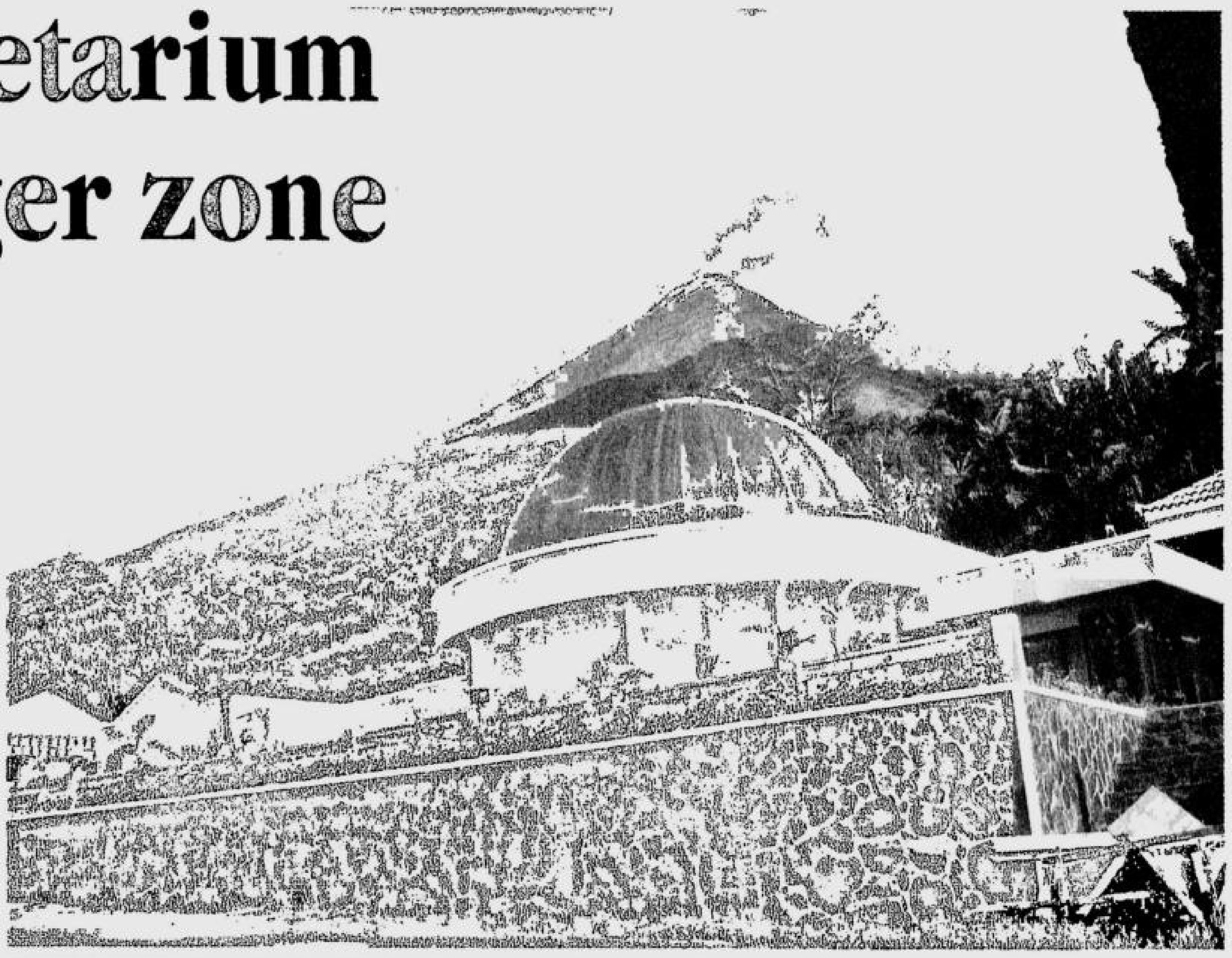
Mayon planetarium also in danger zone

By Gil Francis G. Arevalo
Tabaco City



THE P7.7-MILLION planetarium lies within the 6-km permanent danger zone of Mayon Volcano. ANTONIO CABILES/CONTRIBUTOR

FOR STUDENTS AND TOURISTS who wish to enjoy a "heaven on earth" experience while learning all about the majestic Mount Mayon, the Mayon planetarium is a perfect destination.

The facility, built on the volcano's slope 854 meters above sea level, offers a breathtaking panoramic view of the Pacific Ocean, San Miguel Island, Curangon Shoal, Mount Malinao (another volcano within the so-called Pacific Ring of Fire), nearby towns and lakes, and of course, the famous Mayon skyline.

It also features slide shows or presentations of the volcano's activities for the past centuries.

But the tourist and educational attraction, also known as the Virtual Mayon Simulation and Observatory Facility, also faces Mayon's fury when it erupts as it lies within the 6-km permanent danger zone.

Alex Baloloy, science research analyst of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs), said the 1,000-sq m planetarium compound is in the northeast quadrant of the volcano, identified as one of the critical areas in case of a major eruption.

Since the early 1990s, major eruptions have inflicted the greatest destruction in terms of casualties in the northeast and southeast quadrants.

"We can never really tell what particular portions will be affected or spared in case we raise the alert level to 4 or 5. Mayon Planetarium is one of the areas that will be directly hit by pyroclastic flows and lava trickles," Baloloy said.

An alert level 4 or 5 means the permanent danger zone should be completely cleared of residents.

Since it opened in March, the planetarium has become one of the most-sought places to visit in Tabaco City. Aside from schools in Albay, institutions from neighboring provinces have also conducted educational tours there.

The Philippine Tourism Authority and the Department of Science and Technology highly recommended the facility early this year to be one of the pioneering educational sites in the region.

The one-story planetarium has four rooms housing the library, the virtual room, a mini-museum and an audiovisual hall.

It was constructed just 61 meters above the popular Mayon Skyline Hotel and Convention Center, which used to be known as the Mayon Rest House, according to city engineer Juan Berces.

"We considered both the challenge and the danger of building it there, but in cases like the declaration of alert level 3 status, of course, it is advisable for people not to go there. The fact is that Mayon does not erupt all the time and we are always coordinating with the Phivolcs, as well as the Tabaco City Disaster Coordinating Council as far as the status of Mayon is concerned," Berces said.

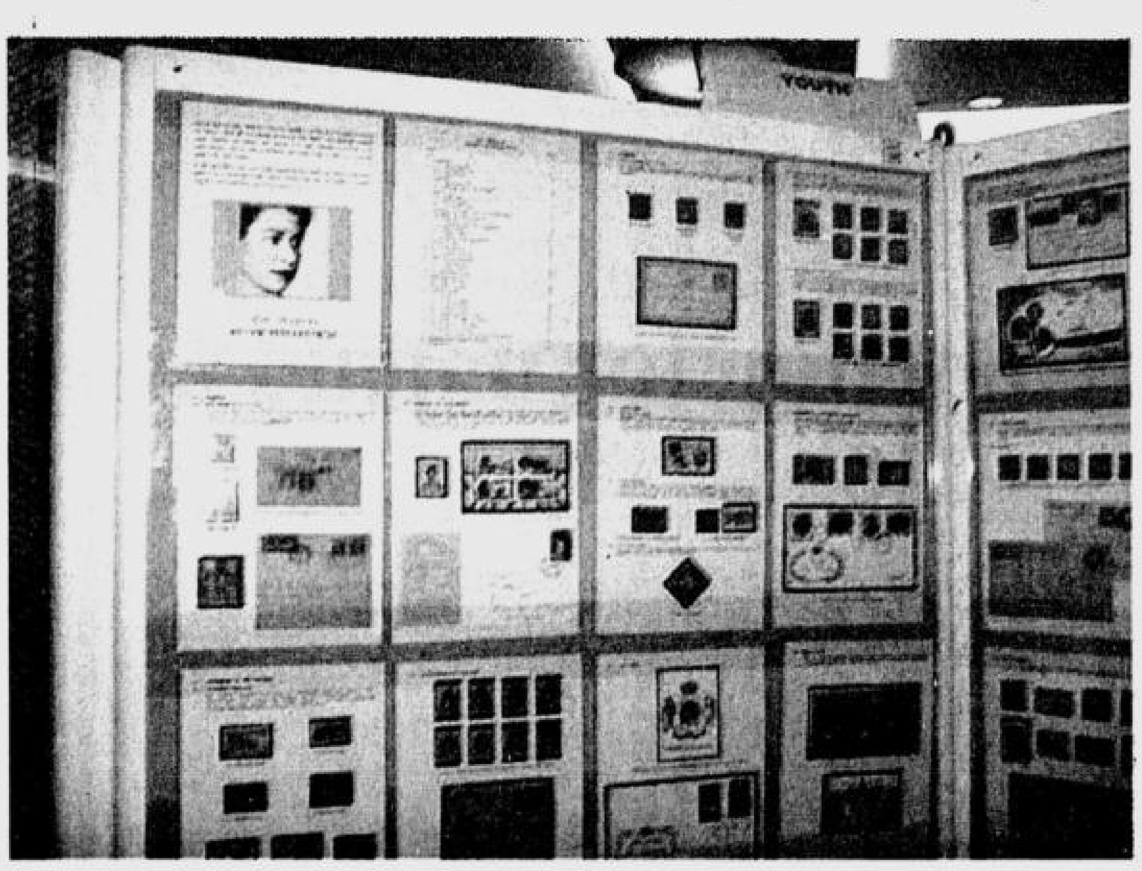
Despite the possible danger, he added, many students and tourists are very eager to reach the place and enjoy the clear and strategic view of Mayon.

"It may look as if we're not serious about what's going on now, but we believe that being at the planetarium provides us an opportunity to experience the thrill and excitement of witnessing the actual eruption of Mt. Mayon," said Ruben Barcoma, 19, a student and mountain climber from Tabaco.

Resident volcanologist Eduardo Laguerta cautioned that it would be better not to visit the place at this time because of the unpredictable behavior of Mayon.

Stamp collecting: All in the family

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
Lucena City



ALYSSAH Xeniah Alcala's (right photo) exhibit at the Canberra Stampshow held at the Helenic Club in Canberra, Australia on March 18-20 (below). CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

FOR 13-YEAR-OLD ALYSsah Xeniah Alcala, the tiny rectangular piece pasted on a mail envelope has been her favorite stuff since Grade 2.

Aside from computer games, Disney television programs, Millionaires' Game and occasional swimming, stamp collecting has been her hobby.

"When you have stamp collectors for parents, it's but natural for me, especially being the only child, to also indulge in the same hobby," she said, referring to her parents Alberto and Antonette.

It started as leisure and fun but it evolved into a passionate personal activity, Alyssah explained.

The Alcalas live in a modest house in a subdivision along the Tayabas-Lucena national road in Barangay Gulang-Gulang in Lucena City.

While other girls dabble on the latest teen stuff, the high school freshman from the Sacred Heart College in Lucena prefers to learn the essential rules of stamp collecting—its tools, language and methods—including the finer forms of soliciting stamps from other collectors worldwide.

For Alyssah, beautiful and exotic stamps and related postal objects are all that matter. Every stamp has its own historical value that when intricately lined up and pasted for safekeeping can provide anyone with an exciting glimpse of the past, she said.

Her exhibit of stamp collections in two frames titled "Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II" won the gold and special prizes at the state level (youth category) at the Canberra Stamp Show 2006 held at the Helenic Club in Canberra, Australia on March 18-20.

The Philatelic Society of Canberra staged the 14th consecutive biennial National Philatelic Convention, better known as the Canberra Stamp Show, which displayed 81 exhibits totaling 344 frames of stamp collections from prominent Australian collectors and a number of avid philatelists from other countries.

Alberto claimed a number of firsts for Alyssah in Canberra: "In the 20 years of the Canberra Stamp Show, Alyssah was the first Filipino to join the exhibition. She was also the youngest exhibitor ever to join the prestigious event at 12 years old and one of the first two exhibitors to receive a gold medal for the youth category."

The same sets of stamps also won awards during the philatelic exhibitions in Gumaca and Lucban towns in Quezon, San Pablo City in Laguna, and the Philippine Postal Office lobby at the Liwasang Bonifacio in Manila last year.

Royal collection

"I am enjoying the sights and culture of the different places of the philatelic exhibitions that our club is joining. I also gained more knowledge and friends through my hobby," Alyssah said.

Alyssah even wrote Queen Elizabeth II (Elizabeth Alexandra Mary Windsor) of the United Kingdom a letter informing her of her collection of different stamps that portray the royal personality.

"The Queen responded with a 'thank you' letter. She also sent me photos of herself inside the Windsor Palace," the beaming Alyssah said as she showed the letter and the photos of Queen Elizabeth.

The girl started exhibiting her prized collections in her school two years ago with her initial compilation of stamps featuring the Virgin Mary and the little Jesus. She named the album "Mother and Child."

"We're only five stamp collectors in our school," Alyssah said with a shade of lament.

Alberto said the Quezon Philatelic Club, of which the whole Alcala family is member, has again initiated the holding of exhibits and friendly competitions in several parts of the province to revive the interest of the public in stamp collection as a worthwhile hobby.

Activist-turned-rebel misses life with family

By Madonna Virola
Somewhere in Occidental Mindoro

HE SPOKE WITH PASSION AS HE TALKED about his work as a spokesperson for the communist-led National Democratic Front (NDF) in Occidental Mindoro.

But when asked about his family, the rebel leader, who introduced himself only as Felizardo, spoke how it was to be separated from his loved ones.

"It is traumatic for my 4-year-old daughter," he said.

The government has launched an "all-out war" against the New People's Army, military wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) that leads the NDF. The Maoist rebels have been waging the longest armed insurgency in the world since 1969.

The military places the NPA strength at 7,500.

Felizardo said he could not support the studies of his only child, "but I know she will understand one day."

If his wife agrees that it is now the right time, Felizardo would rather have her explain to their child why he chose to be away from them.

Felizardo, 37, said he grew up in a religious family. He was active in the choir and in organizing basic ecclesial communities. He even wanted to be a priest.

"I was searching then for the meaning of service," he said.

Once, he was watching some nuns in a convent. He was disturbed that they were expected to be both earning and doing house chores.

When a missionary box was being passed around in a school, Felizardo asked the nuns: "Why not serve the next community first, which is also in need?"

Activism

Felizardo joined the League of Filipino Students and found himself with a box collecting donations for the organization.

But he was "demonized" by some men in uniform. "I was accused of being a communist. I didn't [even] know what it meant. I researched in the encyclopedia and found out more about it," he recalled.

He continued to join rallies and immerse with the poor. His first major assignment was to distribute campaign leaflets.

Instead of just shouting, "Down with imperialism!", he would elaborate on the issue at hand, he said.

While many idealists are focused on changing the society, Felizardo said "the bigger challenges are those about the self—like listening more than talking ..., to be patient, because I still didn't know a lot of things."

He appreciated the feedback sessions in the movement. "They say I'm frank and emotional," he said.

Felizardo acknowledged a difficult life with his kind of work but added that the farmers were in more difficult situation, plowing the land to feed their families.

The warm accommodation of the people, he claimed, was enough to compensate for missing his daughter.

If he had a normal life, he would try to "create a climate for her to discover her inner strength to enable her to love more freely and have the courage to fight whoever and whatever hinders," Felizardo said.

Will the time come when one in search of service does not have to leave his family?

"Perhaps, only God can tell," he confessed.

Britain will no longer hire foreign nurses

By Raj Padilla

LONDON—STARTING NEXT month, the British Home Office will no longer allow the recruitment of foreign nurses as it prepares to remove the nursing and several other health professions from the country's skills shortage list.

The decision was in line with London's wish to accommodate the growing number of "homegrown" nurses, many of whom are still unemployed.

There are roughly 30,000 Filipino nurses in the UK at present.

According to the Home Office rule, which specifically applies to foreign nurses who have less than 18 months experience (Bands 5 and 6), a work permit will be granted only "if a job cannot be filled by British or EU [European Union] applicants."

UK Immigration, a private consultancy firm, said the government move, announced on July 4, did not come as a surprise since "this year there has been a dramatic decrease in the jobs available to British, Commonwealth and European Union citizens who are graduating from the UK universities."

"Eighty-two thousand nurses have recently been added to the workforce as a result of government programs with tens of thousands due to graduate within 18 months," it added.

Foreign nurses, particularly from the Philippines and India, started coming to the UK in 2000 to help address its problem of nurses' shortage.

For 2004 and 2005 alone, the Nursing and Midwifery Council reported that about 11,500 foreign nurses had been recruited to work in National Health Service (NHS) Trust-run hospitals and private care homes.

Job cuts

Many Filipino nurses, however, suspected that the decision was only being carried out to give good reason for job cuts in the NHS, which was in dire financial straits.

At the moment, thousands had already lost their jobs and many more are expected to suffer the same fate in the coming months.

The Royal College of Nursing, a leading nurses' union, described the new rule as rather illogical, saying that over 150,000 nurses are due to retire in the UK in the next five to 10 years.

Fr. Sergs Magbanua, a Filipino Catholic priest based here, said there could be more to the government move than meets the eye.

Similar measures might already be affecting even foreign nurses presently in the UK, he said.

Expired work permits

"There had been reports of late that foreign nurses in some NHS hospitals across the UK whose work permits had expired were no longer issued new ones. In Leeds, for instance, around 50 Filipino nurses were reported to have lost their jobs," said Magbanua, publisher of the Filipino International. The Filipino newspaper is circulated in UK and Ireland.

He said it would be best if Filipino nurses could organize themselves as soon as possible for support or "security" reasons.

Jeffrey Veluz, president of the Filipino Health Workers of Gloucester in Gloucester, England, believes that such a move, including the decision to stop the recruitment of foreign nurses, was aimed at saving what was left with the NHS.

'Unfair'

"Because it is having problems now, the government is doing all it can to save money. It might be the right thing to do now. But it will be really unfair for Filipino nurses in the NHS whose work permit may no longer be renewed. Many of them have already brought their spouses and children in the UK," he said.

Veluz's group was organized only last month, in anticipation of the adverse effects of the NHS crisis.

Short-term measure

Quoting Health Minister Lord Warner, The Times, however, reported that "large-scale recruitment of international nurses was only intended to be a short-term measure. Extra investment in training meant that there was no longer a need to hire junior nurses from abroad."

Warner has belied insinuations that foreign nurses already working in the UK would be affected by the government move.

He said foreign nurses could still be hired to fill specialist nursing openings.

'Gringo' tops controversial nursing board examination

From page A1

sure of passing but because the results might be invalidated due to an alleged leakage of questions and answers in the June 11-12 licensure tests in Baguio City.

When the results were finally announced on Wednesday, he was extremely happy. He bested 17,821 other successful examinees. Although only 42 percent passed, the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) said the examination had the highest recorded number of applicants with 42,000.

Edged out UP Manila

San Diego, a nursing graduate of the University of Pangasinan in Dagupan City, got a rating of 83.2 percent in the exams he took at the Pio del Pilar Elementary School in Sta. Mesa, Manila. He nosed out Rebecca Rachelle Mahor from the University of the Philippines Manila, who got 83 percent.

In Baguio, 73 of the 91 nursing graduates who exposed the alleged cheating during the exams passed. But they said they would pursue their complaint against the PRC and the Board of Nursing.

For those who made it in spite of the scandal, it was "an uncomfortably hollow victory," said Lilian Yangot, one of the complainants.

Describing himself as an "average student," San Diego said he studied hard for the tests, hoping to land in the Top 20.

His mother, Teresita, was more optimistic. She knew her son would be in the Top 10.

Named after Honasan

"He topped the pre-board examinations given by the University Review Center in Sta. Mesa where there were 600 examinees. So I knew he had a big chance of being in the Top 10," she said.

It was therefore a pleasant surprise when San Diego, the second in a brood of five boys and the second nurse in the family, emerged as topnotcher.

Teresita said her son was named after former Sen. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan, who was very popular when he was born in 1986, at the time of the Edsa Revolution. Authorities are now hunting Honasan for alleged involvement in a coup plot against the Arroyo administration.

Test answers

Yangot, one of the leakage complainants, said a review center circulated handwritten copies of the test answers in Baguio.

The PRC has traced the leakage to two members of the Board of Nursing. But Yangot said the commission never addressed their petition to suspend the board members and to hold the test results until an independent investigation was completed.

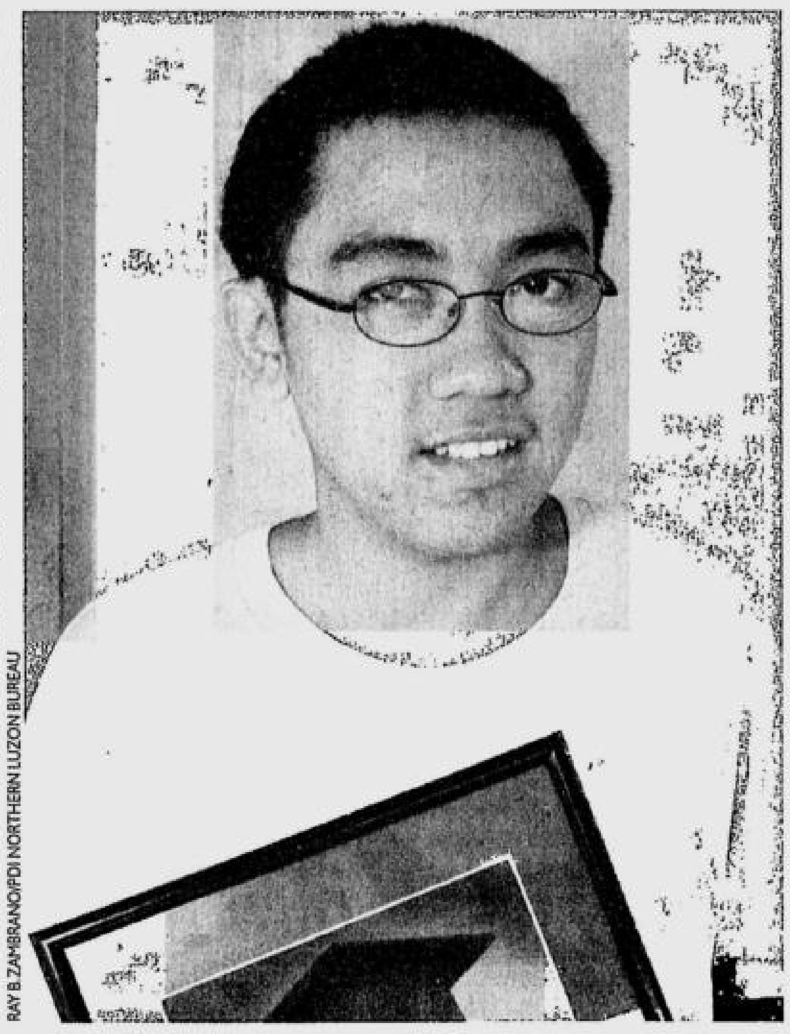
On top of cases lined up before the PRC, the students and Baguio's nursing school deans are going to court this week to compel the government agency to reveal how the results were computed, said Cheryl Daytec-Yangot, the group's lawyer.

Maria Grace Lacanaria, dean of the St. Louis University College of Nursing, said the schools wanted to make sure that the whole process of conducting the exams was "transparent" because the scandal would haunt this year's batch of licensed nurses.

"We're afraid that if the PRC does not explain how they computed the results, the flunkers will go to court to invalidate the whole results," Daytec-Yangot said.

Joy at dawn

San Diego said he learned that he topped the tests from a classmate, Cecilia Roxas, who phoned him at 3 a.m. Wednesday.



RAY B. ZAMBRANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

UP (UNIVERSITY OF PANGASINAN) EDGES OUT UP MANILA, thanks to Gringo de Guzman San Diego of Mangaldan, Pangasinan, who worries that his topnotch standing could be downgraded due to the alleged leaks of the nursing board exam.

"I did not believe her at first. But she said she was serious as she saw the results [posted at the Professional Regulation Commission] in the Internet," he said.

His father, Rodolfo, 54, who was awake at that time, asked him who he was talking to. "I told him it was a classmate who informed me that I topped the exams," he said.

Cheers erupted as father and son could not contain their joy. Soon, the entire family was up, celebrating his feat in the wee hours of the morning in their house in the farming village of Amansabina here.

Their cellular phones were busy receiving congratulatory messages while their land line was flooded with calls from relatives, friends and San Diego's classmates and teachers.

San Diego's elder brother, Theodore Ray, is a nurse, while the third sibling, Don Christopher, is a first year nursing student. The younger boys, Rodolfo Jr. and John Carlos, are in high school.

Overseas work

San Diego said his immediate plan was to work in a special tertiary hospital, like the Philippine Heart Center. He also plans to work abroad so he can help send his younger siblings to college.

His father is a certified public accountant but has decided to drive his own taxi in Metro Manila. His mother buys and sells rice, and manages a backyard piggery in their village.

"My aunts in the United States—one a nurse and the other an accountant—helped send me to school by paying my tuition," San Diego said.

He said it would be embarrassing if they would still depend on his aunts for his siblings' school needs.

"I hope to help my parents so I'm planning to work abroad. But I want to return after my brothers graduate from college," he said.

San Diego placed third in his class when he graduated from the David Elementary School. He was fourth honorable mention when he graduated from the Mangaldan National High School.

Good study habits

His mother said San Diego had good study habits and always read his books and notes.

He hardly went out when he was a student. He stayed at home and helped in household chores whenever he had no classes, she said.

San Diego said it was hard work and diligence that helped him through the board exams.

"Have confidence in yourself but be serious in your studies. Even if you are intelligent but you do not study well, you may not excel," he said.

As to the controversy surrounding the alleged leakage in the exams, San Diego said: "If [the allegations were] true, *sana managot ang naglabas ng* leakage. Unfair *kasi doon sa mga nagsikap para pumasa, tapos yong iba umasa na lang sa* leakage (I hope those responsible for leaking the test questions and answers should be punished. It would be unfair to those who worked hard to pass the exams when there were students who passed due to the leak)."

Special interest

One of the complainants, Cyndi Erfe, said she was recruited for an overseas job in the United States before she decided to testify on the anomaly.

"It is likely employers will have a special-interest in this batch of licensing applicants because of the controversy," she said.

Only Yangot, Erfe, fellow complainants Sheila Bariao and Xeres Acosta joined their deans for a celebratory lunch on Wednesday.

"Quantitatively, this year's number of passers is the highest ... but the results suggest no [action] was done to address the leakage," Daytec-Yangot said.

Transparency

Ruth Thelma Tingda, nursing school dean of the Easter College in Baguio and governor of the Philippine Nurses Association, said the demand for nurses abroad had helped increase the number of nursing schools from 200 in 2005 to 470 this year.

Tingda said transparency would also help the credibility of this year's successful examinees, many of whom come from schools that have poor accomplishments, based on a performance classification survey by the PRC and the Commission on Higher Education. ***With a report from Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

GMA gets 70% grade from Congress oversight group

From page A1

Michael Defensor, President Macapagal-Arroyo's chief of staff, in announcing the report of the congressional oversight committee assigned to assess the administration's performance last year based on Ms Arroyo's 10-point agenda.

The committee gave the administration 70 percent for having achieved a balanced budget but being unable as yet to forge peace with its enemies, Defensor said.

"It's not necessarily that we failed here. *Hindi* necessarily *bagsak kami*. It's just that they want a different track," he said.

Defensor said No. 10 of the 10-point agenda had been put on the back burner and should not be considered in the report because it dealt with the objective of putting "a fair closure to the divisiveness among the Edsa I, II and III forces."

"Healing the wounds of Edsa—this should be considered put on hold because of the events that transpired in the past," he told reporters in reference to the continued bad political climate, which saw a purported attempt by Left-Right forces to seek Ms Arroyo's ouster in February.

6 points

According to Defensor, the oversight committee reported that the administration earned passing marks in six of nine points in the 10-point agenda.

He said the committee gave passing marks to these points—achieving a balanced budget; providing classrooms, books and education for all; job generation; decentralization of progress nationwide through the use of transport networks like the roll-on-roll-off system; decongestion of Metro Manila; and development of Clark and Subic as the best international service.

ARROYO: "Not necessarily" a failing grade, says Defensor

"So we have been able to achieve 6 out of 9, or approximately 70 percent of the targets we have set," he said.

He pointed out that the administration achieved a balanced budget because of the economic and fiscal reforms that had been put in place.

Conditional marks

The oversight committee gave conditional marks to the administration in providing water and electricity to barangays nationwide, automating the electoral process, and putting a just end to the peace process, Defensor said.

He said that in the peace process, the administration was making headway at least with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. "There's just details we're looking into," he said.

The administration had dropped peace talks with the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front and instead ordered a renewed offensive against the NPA.

Defensor admitted that the administration continued to have problems with poll automation.

He said it had set aside "what we hope would be enough funding for the reform agenda of the electoral process."

This includes the P1.3 billion for automation and the P5 billion to be used for next year's polls, he said, adding that Malacañang would seek a supplemental budget for this.

Opposition signatories

On the provision of water and electricity for all, Defensor said that while this had been achieved in 38,000 of the 45,000 barangays (or a 95-percent achievement), the oversight committee cited the need for this to be achieved in every household.

"We're happy to note that this committee report was signed by many members of the opposition," Defensor said of the committee chaired by Rep. Danilo Suarez.

He said the committee had been asked to assess the administration's performance beyond the 10-point agenda and to review its other efforts, like liberating barangays known to be NPA strongholds, as well as its inroads in the key industries of mining, tourism and business processing operations (call centers).

With the President set to deliver her State of the Nation Address on July 24, Defensor said her speech would center on the "megaregions" and their economic potentials.

Asked whether Charter change (Cha-cha) would also comprise a major part of the Sona, Defensor said he expected Ms Arroyo to talk about it "and why it's needed."

"And just to disabuse the minds of our friends in the opposition, Cha-cha is being pushed by the President because the political reforms that are needed will also pave the way for strengthening the economy and further pushing the country's development," he said.

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2 Japanese surprised why 'Nicole' in court

From page A1

discussions [about the rape] are done in front of her," Niwa said.

During such stages in the trial, the complainant is normally "protected from the audience" and moved to another room, she added.

Nagahashi shared another observation: The four accused US Marines looked like "they don't have any reflection over what they've done. It all seemed so natural for them."

No stranger to Nicole's case

The two women are no stranger to the stories that Japanese women crying for justice in sexual assault cases have lodged against US servicemen stationed in their country.

Niwa is the director of the Tokyo-based Asia-Japan Women's Resource Center, a group working for the welfare of the "comfort women" of World War II and assisting victims of violence and sex crimes involving contemporary "GIs" in Japan.

Nagahashi is Niwa's colleague in Japan's activist community and is with the secretariat of the Santama-Kasanag-Kai, a labor organization also based in Tokyo.

Find a voice

The two visitors were in town upon the invitation of Lotlot Requizo, the secretary general of the women's advocacy group Kaisa Ka and a member of Task Force Subic Rape.

The two women encouraged the Filipino people to continue finding a "voice" concerning cases similar to Nicole's.

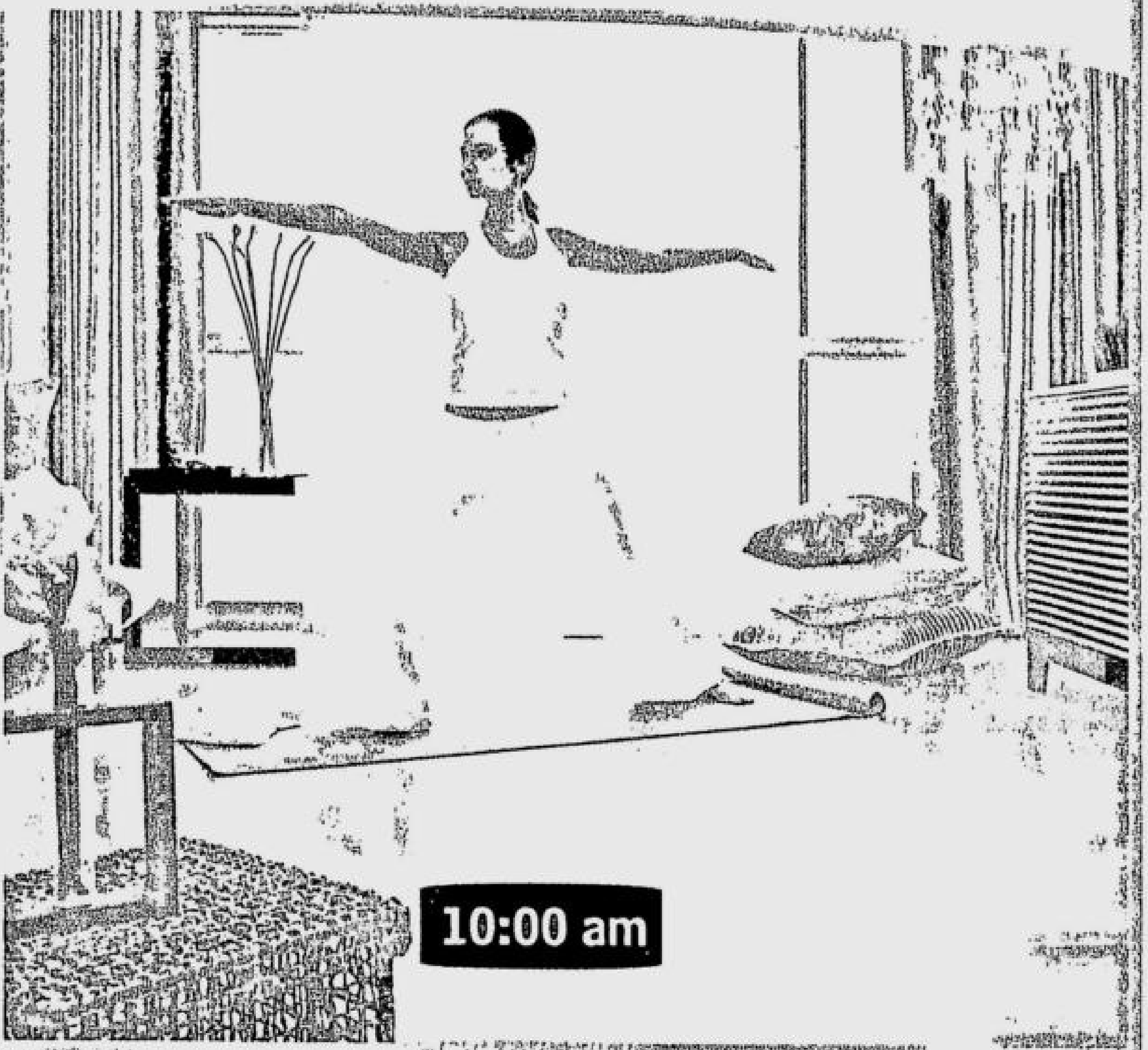
They said governments could "successfully hide such cases."

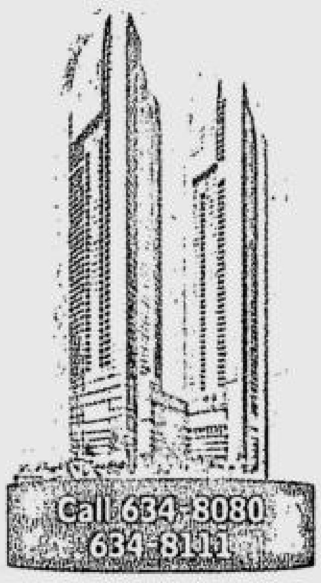
They lamented that the Japanese people were hardly aware of Nicole's case.

The two women shook hands with Nicole and members of her family at the beginning and end of Tuesday's hearing.

According to Masa Sawada, a correspondent for the Japanese news service Manila Shimbun who served as the interpreter for this report, the two women were actually on a private holiday tour of Manila and just took a side trip to attend the landmark trial.

Enjoy every moment.





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5 prisoners escape from Munti

DOJ orders suspension of jail guards on watch

INMATES at the medium security compound of the New Bilibid Prisons trim each other's hair in this file photo. ERIK ARAZAS

By Jocelyn R. Uy

FIVE INMATES BROKE OUT OF THE NEW Bilibid Prisons (NBP) in Muntinlupa City at around 7:30 p.m. Tuesday as they were being taken back to their dormitories from the prison hospital.

Officials identified the five as William Osoteo, Arvic Valentino, Raul Guimba, Alex Panida and Jojo Punzalan. They were detained at the medium security compound of the NBP on car theft or homicide charges.

Vicente Vinarao, Bureau of Corrections director, told reporters yesterday that 10 inmates had complained of stomach pains at around 5:20 p.m. Tuesday. He added that the prisoners requested that they be taken to the NBP hospital at the maximum security compound.

Upon the order of shift commander Insp. Rodolfo delos Santos, three jail guards—Ernesto Aquino, Cresencio Mendoza and Michael Garcia—brought the 10 inmates to the hospital, some three kilometers away from the medium security compound, on board an open multi-cab, Vinarao added.

He said that after two hours, doctors sent back nine of the prisoners to their dormitories. Only one stayed behind at the hospital for treatment.

"By this time, the jail guards should have sensed that the inmates' complaint was just a ruse to help them escape," an obviously annoyed Vinarao added.

On their way back to the medium security compound, one of the inmates stabbed Mendoza, the jail guard who was driving the multi-cab.

Then a scuffle for one of the guards' M-14 rifle ensued, Vinarao said.

The inmates, however, dropped the rifle when another jail guard fired a warning shot. Five of the prisoners then jumped out of the vehicle and ran in different directions. The guards, however, managed to bring back the remaining four to their dormitories.

Mendoza, on the other hand, was rushed to the Muntinlupa Medical Center for a knife wound in the chest. He was declared out of danger yesterday.

Vinarao, meanwhile, said he would immediately suspend Delos Santos and the three jail guards, as recommended by Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez. The four will also face criminal and administrative charges.

"I think the evidence will warrant (the filing of charges) because it is very obvious that that there was a gross violation of prison rules. Because of the negligence of the guards, the inmates were able to escape," Vinarao added.

He named the violations committed by the jailguards: First, they did not seek a referral from the medium security compound's infirmary before bringing the inmates to the NBP hospital. Second, the inmates were dressed in civilian clothes when they were taken out of jail. They were also not handcuffed.

According to Vinarao, there should have been more guards to watch over the inmates. The guards should have not used an open vehicle like the multi-cab to bring the prisoners to the hospital, he added.

Gonzalez also asked the National Bureau of Investigation to conduct a separate investigation on the guards who escorted the prisoners prior to their escape.

At the same time, the justice secretary also ordered the suspension of applications for medical and hospital furlough of inmates pending the outcome of the investigation.

With Armand N. Nocum

WHAT'S INSIDE

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Displaced railway dwellers move to new homes /A18

AP

Binay rival arrested for libel

By Tarra V. Quismundo

A POLITICAL RIVAL of Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay was arrested yesterday morning, a day after he was found guilty of libel charges that the mayor had filed against him a decade ago.

Roberto Brillante did not resist when policemen went to his house on Kalayaan Avenue, Barangay West Rembo, at around 8:30 a.m. to enforce the arrest warrant issued by Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 141 Judge Manuel Victorio.

Remarks

Victorio had earlier sentenced Brillante, a former vice mayor and councilor—to a jail term ranging from 11 months and 10 days to four months and 20 days—for his libelous remarks against Binay during his radio program on Sept. 29, 1995 which aired over radio station dwBC.

"... This court hereby rules that the utterance by accused through radio is not qualifiedly privileged, perforce malice in law is presumed," said Victorio.

"My defense here is the truth. I will bring this case to the Court of Appeals," Brillante told the INQUIRER.

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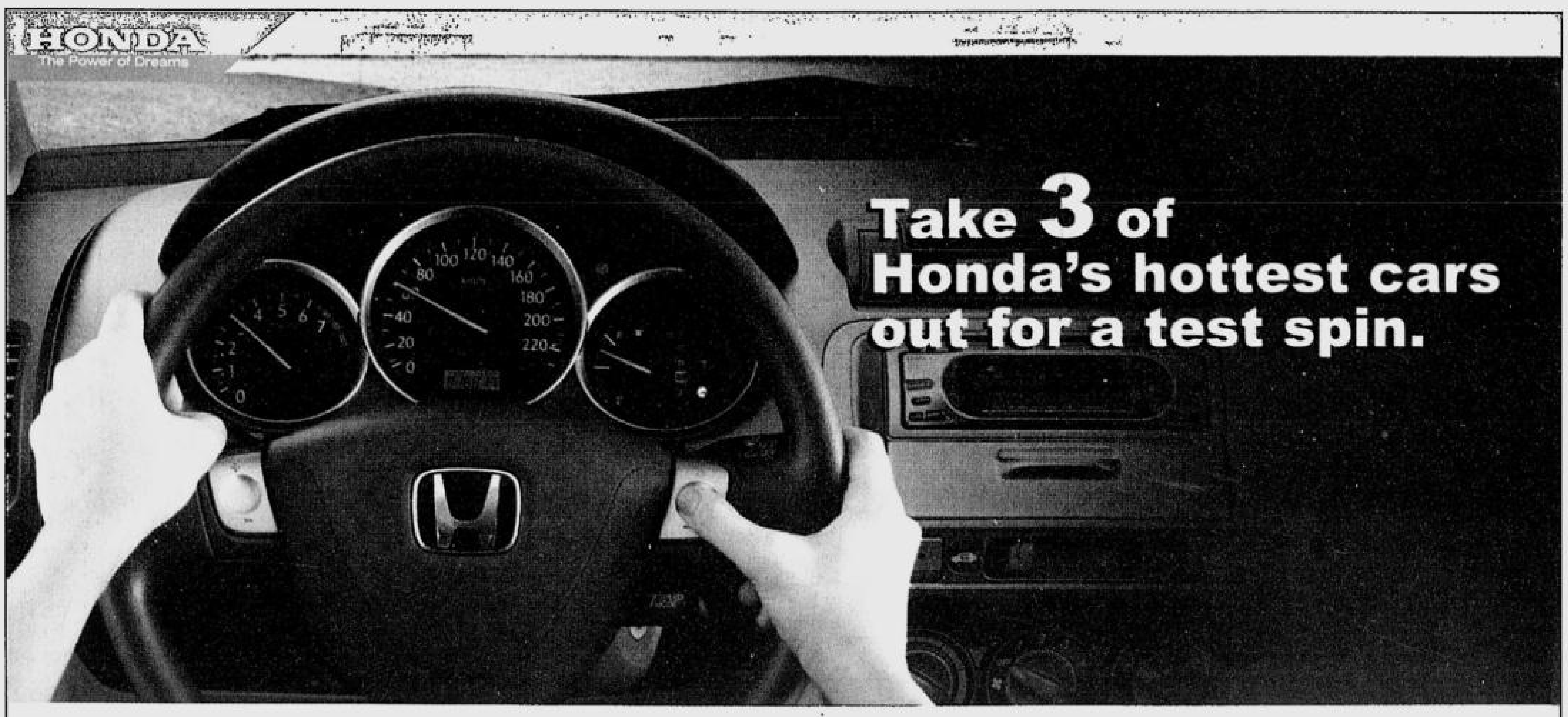

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DOJ orders BI to issue hold order vs Atienza aide

By Tina G. Santos

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INvestigation (NBI) is conducting a background check on Noli Sugay, the special assistant of Manila Mayor Lito Atienza accused of killing a jeepney driver in Tondo over a parking space dispute last week. Yesterday, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez directed Immigration Commissioner Alipio Fernandez Jr. to put Sugay on its hold departure list.

Ruel Lasala, chief of the NBI National Capital Region, said that a check of their records showed that a certain Jose Noli Urquico Sugay, of 19 Nicaragua St., Better Living Subdivision in Parañaque City, has an arrest warrant on charges of serious physical injuries filed against him on May 7, 2002 in Branch 80 of the Muntinlupa Municipal Trial Court. Sugay was also charged with malicious mischief in another Muntinlupa court on Oct. 13, 2000. But Lasala added they have yet to check the status of the cases. "And we'll still check if the Sugay we found in our files is the same Sugay being implicated in the killing of Aries Luriz, a jeepney driver, in Tondo recently," he added.

Meanwhile, a commitment order from the Pasig Regional Trial Court Branch 165 to the Bureau of Prisons, showed that someone bearing Sugay's name was charged with murder by insurance and parricide in 1986. It is not yet known if he is the person accused of killing Luriz.

METROBRIEFS

Homeless families

AROUND 1,000 families lost their houses when a fire broke out in Barangay Tangos, Navotas, before midnight Tuesday. According to residents, the fire started at the house of Junior Dacuycuy and his wife, Lucy, both in their 60s. Arson investigators have yet to determine the cause of the blaze although the neighbors of the couple said they heard the two fighting beforehand. Firefighters had a hard time getting near the site because of the narrow pathways and the cars parked along the road. The fire was finally put out at around 4:05 a.m. Wednesday.

Nancy C. Carvajal

8 armed men fall

POLICE yesterday arrested eight suspected members of an alleged private armed group believed to be involved in several "killings, illegal logging and land grabbing" cases in Tanay, Rizal. Rizal police director, Senior Supt. Freddie Panen, said the suspects were arrested on Wednesday morning in a house in Barangay Calumbaya in Tanay. The raiding team was armed with arrest and search warrants from regional and municipal trial courts in Morong. He identified the group leader as Camilo Mantala, who was among those arrested. Panen said they also confiscated at least eight high and low power firearms as well as hand grenades, ammunition and unlicensed chainsaws from the house. The operation was prompted by the spate of killings in the province in the past few months, the Rizal provincial police also said in a statement.

Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

Death for kidnap

DESPITE the abolition of the capital punishment, a Manila judge yesterday sentenced three suspected members of the New People's Army to death for kidnapping a businesswoman five years ago. Judge Teresa Soriaso of the Regional Trial Court Branch 27 also ordered Eduardo Fernandez, Romeo Lingcoran and Geraldo Andrade to pay their victim Yolanda Escobar a total of P440,000. Records at the Manila Regional Trial Court showed that the three accused had kidnapped the victim on Dec. 2, 2001 in Tiaong, Quezon.

Tina G. Santos

HOUSE painter Tomas Chavez, carries his two-year-old son, Zeus, outside their shanty built alongside railroad tracks in Manila. A father of 12, Chavez is among tens of thousands of slum dwellers who have to be relocated by the government to make way for the construction of a modern rail system funded by China.

AP PHOTOS

CHAVEZ, his wife Alma, their children and other members of their extended family pose outside their new home in Cabuyao, Laguna.

Painful trek to land of not much promise

IT WAS ONLY SUNRISE BUT house painter Tomas Chavez was already nursing a bottle of beer, trying to numb the harshness of life.

Inside a shack of discarded wood and tin sheets, his pregnant wife and 12 children awaited a family milestone. They were being forced out of Manila—considered the land of opportunity by most Filipinos—to low-cost housing beside a garbage dump more than 50 kilometers away.

Chavez, 44, is among tens of thousands of slum dwellers being relocated by the government from makeshift homes sitting dangerously along a 1,060-kilometer rail line to make way for the North Railway system financed by China.

Removing the railway shantytowns, long an eyesore and a symbol of the country's crushing poverty, is necessary as the government strives to foster prosperity and modernity, officials said.

No matter how poor his shack, though, Chavez was heartbroken to leave the place that two generations of his family called home.

"I have come to love that place," he said wistfully. "Eight out of my 12 children were born in that house."

He watched with his family as government workers tore his shanty apart with hammers and crowbars in just an hour. When they left, a scrap of cheap plastic sheet that served as its floor was the only reminder of where their home stood.

Chavez tried to sound upbeat.

"We were told the relocation site is a good place. I should think positively," he said. But his new home in Cabuyao, Laguna doesn't hold much more promise. Near a garbage dump, it is swarming with mosquitoes and lacks electricity and running water. The factories, schools, friends and opportunities that abound in Manila are far away.

THE RELOCATION site in the province of Laguna.

Some shanty dwellers that have already moved to their new homes—many still unfinished—in Cabuyao have returned to Manila's slums.

After a few days, Chavez followed them. He packed a bag of clothes and his tools and headed back to Manila in search of work, leaving his family in their new house.

"Surviving has become more difficult, but I have no other choice but to adjust," he said.

AP

Accident site closed to workers for now

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE CITY GOVERNMENT OF Makati yesterday ordered the indefinite suspension of construction work at the Cash 'N Carry Supermarket compound on Filmore Street after two men were killed as they working on the site Tuesday night.

The suspension was announced by city engineer Nelson Morales following the collapse of a trench being dug by workers. Three workers were buried underneath the pile of loose soil. Two died while the third survived.

"There is a city ordinance that provides for the suspension of construction after an incident has occurred. So we will inspect the whole vicinity of the compound first and see if there are any problems in terms of compliance with the building code in areas other than the trench," Morales said in a press briefing.

Construction workers Danilo Paqueros, Randy Maravilla and Alden Monteroso were working in a 12-foot deep trench in front of the supermarket when the loose soil that they had piled on one side of the trench fell on them.

Paqueros, 32, survived but Maravilla and Monteroso, both 25, were already dead when they were brought to the hospital. More than an hour had passed before rescuers were able to dig them out of the trench.

The Makati City Engineer's Office and the police are conducting separate investigations of the incident.

Morales noted that safety precautions were lacking in the trench, part of a drainage system being set up in an open space in front of the supermarket which is being upgraded into a mall.

"With the depth of the trench, wooden sheet piles should have been placed on either side as a safety measure, especially given the quality of the soil," said Morales, attributing the accident to a "problem with work methodology."

The sheets could have restrained either side of the trench as diggings continued below, averting a possible collapse.

Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, meantime, said they would assess the city's emergency response program, citing possible lapses in the way rescue operations were conducted Tuesday night.

"There was no ground commander last night, nobody calling the shots," the mayor observed.

Gov't, not Church, should decide on health issues

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

THE PRESENCE OF FORMER Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn "Joc-joc" Bolante in the United States is a ticking time bomb for those involved in the fertilizer scam, chief among them a power broker.

Under US Federal Rules of Practice, any Filipino-American group or individual can initiate a petition for pre-litigation discovery.

This entails requesting a federal court to take Bolante's testimony on the possibility of filing a case against him and his co-conspirators for alleged misuse of US aid or loan to the Philippines.

Part of the P728 million fertilizer fund scam could have come from US aid or a loan.

The lawsuit by Fil-Ams against the crony of First Gentleman Mike Arroyo may say that they were hurt as taxpayers.

Coupled with tough anti-racketeering statutes in the United States for which Bolante and his friends would be liable, some people in the Macapagal-Arroyo administration are probably losing sleep.

In the US legal system, you can literally bet on deposed President Erap's ironic words "*walang kaikaibigan, walang kama-kamaganak, walang kasa-kasama* (no friends, relatives and cronies)."

My lawyer friends who are knowledgeable about American law tell me an avalanche could take place if certain Fil-Ams would sue Bolante et al for racketeering and examine him under oath.

Even the late President Marcos had to settle with a Filipino-American in the US when the latter sued Marcos for racketeering in 1984, according to my friend who was personally involved.

How ironic that Bolante, who escaped to the United States to evade prosecution in the country, might face criminal charges there.

If that's not karma or poetic justice at work, I don't know what is.

* * *

If the government keeps listening to the Catholic Church on matters pertaining to the health and general welfare of the citizenry, it won't be able to formulate policies that are timely.

The Church is out of sync with present reality.

It still lives in the Middle Ages when it comes to sex.

That's why it opposes sex education in public schools.

What the Church doesn't know is that many adolescents are experimenting with sex, but are not aware of its consequences like early pregnancy, abortion and even social diseases.

Sex education would make them think twice before engaging in irresponsible sex.

When it comes to health, the Church should let government decide on its own.

And to the people in government: Ignore the Church meddling when it comes to the general welfare.

You don't go to hell for looking after the welfare of the citizenry.

DID YOU KNOW

RIZAL Park was originally called Bagumbayan (new town) by the Spaniards. They later changed the name to Luneta to denote a detached, crescent-shaped fort. The area came to be known as Rizal Park after the unveiling of a monument honoring Dr. Jose Rizal on Dec. 30, 1913, his 17th death anniversary. *Cyril L. Bonabente, PDI Research*

1 hurt in cargo delivery firm heist along España

By Tina G. Santos

A FRUIT VENDOR WAS SERIOUSLY injured after he was shot by one of three motorcycle-riding suspects who robbed a parcel and cargo delivery company in Manila yesterday afternoon.

Police said Harry Tobato remained under observation at the University of Sto. Tomas Hospital where he was rushed for treatment.

An investigation showed that two men posing as clients went inside the LBC branch on España Street at around 12:15 p.m.

Lookout

A third suspect stood in front of the establishment and served as a lookout, Chief Insp. Jesus Bacani of the Manila Police District's Scene of the Crime Operatives said.

Once inside, the suspect announced the heist and told LBC employee Jose Ramirez not to look at them as they scooped up the money which amounted to P20,000 from the counter.

When the suspects left the company, Ramirez followed them and shouted, "*Mga holdaper yan!*" (They are holdup men!)

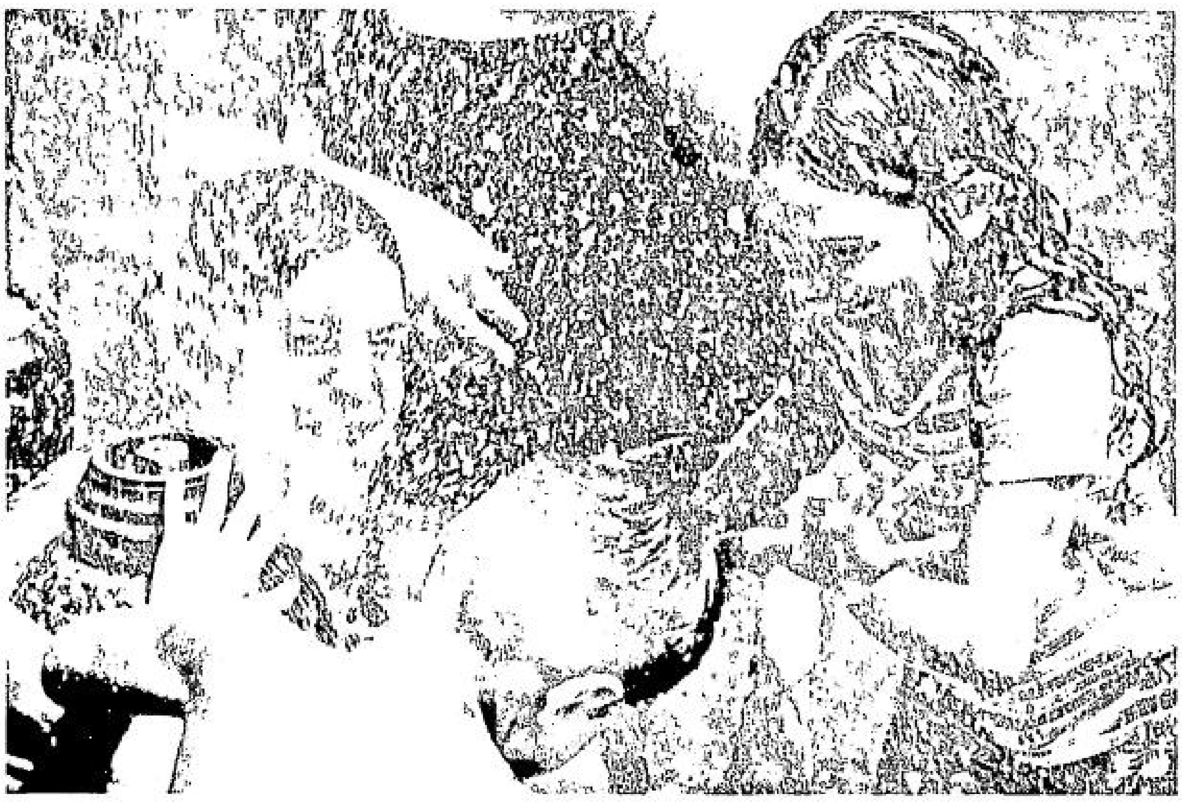
The suspects fired at him but missed.

One of them then fired at Tobato whose cart was blocking their motorcycle.

Bystanders claimed Tobato was hit in the chest.

Police said the LBC branch was an easy target for robbers because no security guard was manning the establishment.

The owner of a nearby establishment said the branch had been robbed several times in the past.



HEAT WAVE. Youngsters spray themselves with water from an open fire hydrant, as temperatures rise to the high 90s in Newark, New Jersey, July 18. AP

Death toll in Java tsunami hits 531

PANGANDARAN, INDONESIA—UNFOUNDED RUMORS of another killer wave sparked mass panic Wednesday in the town hardest hit by the Indonesian tsunami, as amateur video captured some of the horror of the disaster. The death toll rose to 531, with more than 270 missing.

The video shows children playing in the surf and building sandcastles followed by brief footage of a wall of black water bearing down on the beach in Pangandaran. The camera person then runs away amid screams. The video was shown on Metro TV.

The tsunami was triggered by a 7.7-magnitude undersea earthquake and smashed into a 180-km stretch of Java island's coastline, which was unaffected by the devastating 2004 Asian tsunami.

The waves, more than two meters high, reached 200 meters inland in some places, destroying scores of houses, restaurants and hotels. Cars, motorbikes and boats were left mangled in fishing nets, furniture and other debris.

It was unclear how Wednesday's rumor of another tsunami spread, but it caused mass panic among the town's traumatized residents. Shouting "the water is coming!" more than 1,000 ran from the beach area or jumped on bikes or in cars and headed inland.

"People suddenly started running so I joined them," said Marino, a 42-year-old man who was caught up in the exodus.

Police and army teams with sniffer dogs and mechanical equipment on Wednesday kept searching for survivors, but found only bodies amid the ruins, pushing the death toll to 531, said Maman Susanto, from the government's national disaster coordinating board. Several foreign tourists were among the dead.

He said another 275 people were listed as missing.

The Hawaii-based Pacific Tsunami Warning Center and Japan's Meteorological Agency issued warnings of a possible tsunami about 15 minutes after Monday's quake. The tsunami struck Java about 45 minutes later before authorities had time to warn anyone on the coast.

At the area's main hospital, in the town of Banjar, medics Wednesday treated a steady stream of patients, most from the Pangandaran coast. Some slept on dirty mattresses on the floor, while others were treated in the admissions hall.

Surgeons amputated the left leg of a woman who was trapped under the rubble of her house. *AP*

Bush blocks probe of spying program

WASHINGTON—US PRESIDENT George W. Bush blocked a Justice Department probe into a secret program to tap international phone calls and electronic communications of US citizens, Attorney General Alberto Gonzales said Tuesday.

Testifying before the Senate Judiciary Committee, Gonzales confirmed that Bush put a halt to an inquiry by department lawyers into the National Security Agency (NSA) program, which involved wiretaps without court warrants.

Meanwhile, two US lawmakers challenged the Justice Department on Tuesday to explain what rights the administration had in tapping phones and allegedly leaking information about sensitive investigations to the media.

The department's Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) was to look into the department's role in the NSA program and the legality of its warrantless eavesdropping.

The electronic surveillance program sparked a firestorm after its existence was first disclosed in December by the New York Times.

In a letter to Gonzales made public Tuesday, Democratic Sen. Charles Schumer and Rep. William Delahunt pointed to alleged security leaks in the Bush administration.

The letter focused attention on US intelligence efforts and public accountability. Administration officials defended their effort, but the opposition lawmakers questioned one of the most delicate issues now facing the Bush administration.

They particularly pointed to The Washington Times, the conservative US capital daily, as reporting news "that appear to have been classified at the time of disclosure."

The letter asked the Bush administration to explain how such information could be published in newspapers when the country was engaged in a "war on terror." *AFP*

Suicide bomber kills 59

KUFA, IRAQ—A SUICIDE bomber killed 59 people in a crowded Iraqi market on Tuesday after luring Shiite day laborers aboard his minivan with an offer of casual work.

The explosion, some 50-100 meters from a golden-domed Shiite shrine, tore through the minibus shortly after it had pulled out of the market with a group of laborers aboard.

"A man driving a KIA van with an Iraqi accent came and said: 'I need laborers.' After the laborers got on and packed the vehicle he blew it up," said witness Nasir Faisal.

"Four of my cousins were killed. They were standing beside the van. Their bodies were scattered far and wide by the blast."

Blood-stained clothes lay amid the debris. *Reuters*

WORLDBRIEFS

9 Palestinians killed in Gaza, West Bank

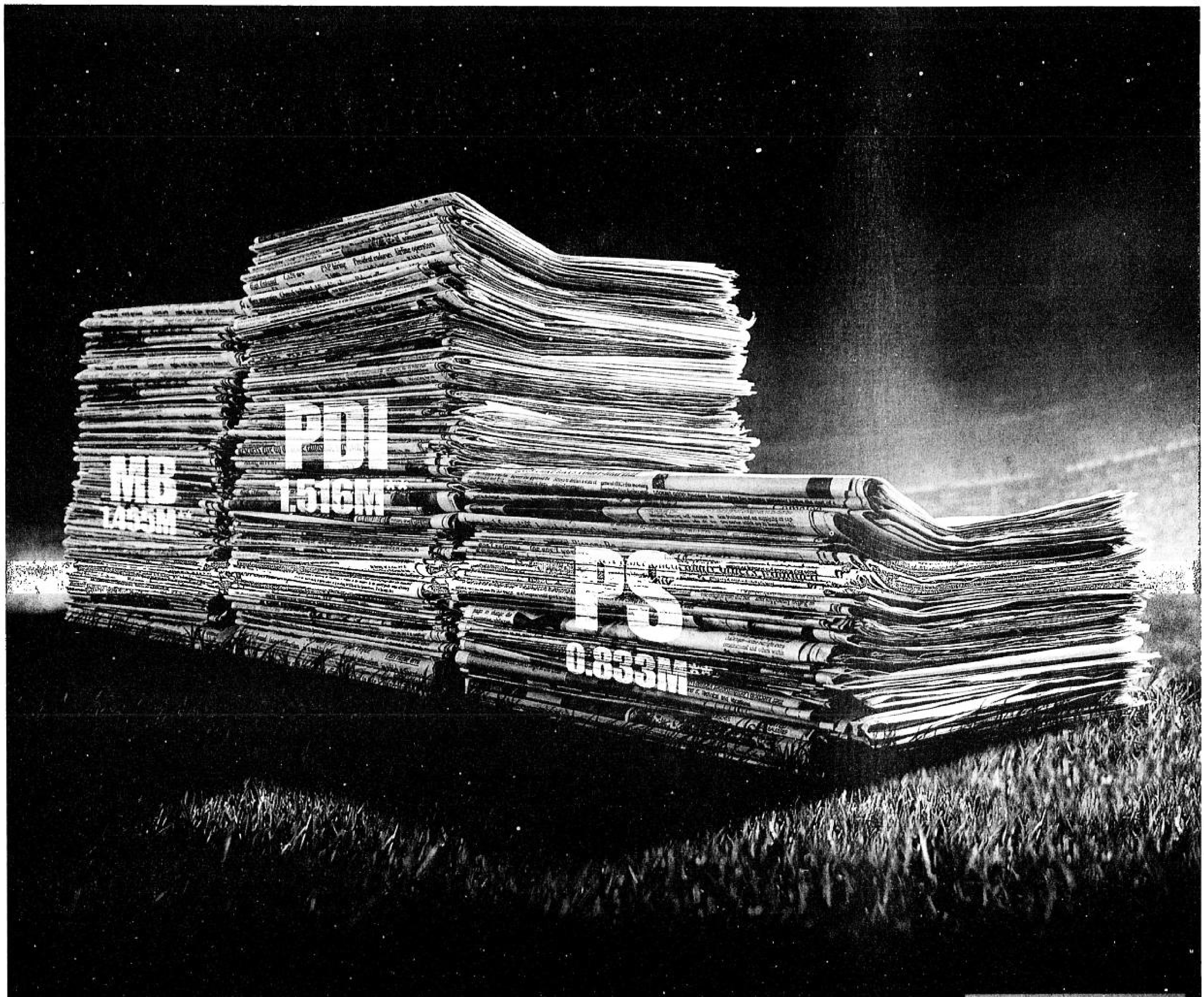
GAZA CITY—Israeli forces killed six Palestinians Wednesday after tanks moved into the Mughazi refugee camp in central Gaza under cover of machine gun fire, the latest incursion in Israel's three-week military push in the seaside territory. In a separate army operation in the West Bank city of Nablus, at least three Palestinians were killed when the army surrounded a Palestinian prison where wanted militants were apparently hiding, Palestinian officials said. In Mughazi, Palestinians said five militants were killed and five wounded in clashes. In two Israeli air strikes after sunrise, one militant was killed and at least 13 more Palestinians were wounded, two critically, hospital officials said. *AP*

Deportation of terror suspect urged

OTTAWA—Canada is pressing ahead with plans to deport an Algerian man deemed to be a national security risk, despite his protestations that he could be tortured in Algeria, the man's lawyer and wife said on Tuesday. Mohamed Harkat is currently out on bail while the Supreme Court decides whether the system of national security certificates used to detain him without trial are constitutional or not. Canada's Border Services Agency sent him a letter last Friday saying it planned to proceed with a deportation order that was signed in March 2005. Harkat's lawyer, Paul Copeland, said he would file for a judicial review of the decision. *Reuters*

Senate passes stem cell measure

WASHINGTON—The US Senate on Tuesday approved a measure increasing stem cell research funding in the face of the first and almost certain veto by US President George W. Bush. Stem cell research advocates say the technique shows promise for the treatment of degenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's, and for diabetes. Opponents say the destruction of human embryos is morally wrong. With the 63-37 vote it was unlikely that Congress would be able to muster the requisite two-thirds vote in both the Senate and House of Representatives to override a veto, which would be Bush's first since taking office in January 2001. *AFP*



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We thank you, our valued readers, for making us your #1.
*Nielsen Media Index 2006 **Broadsheet Yesterday Readers

Massive exodus out of Lebanon

Foreigners race to get aboard first available transport to flee bombings

BEIRUT—EUROPEANS AND LEBANESE WITH FOREIGN passports fled Lebanon by the thousands into early Wednesday as the US Navy sent a cruise ship to Beirut to begin the evacuation of some of the 25,000 US citizens in the country.

Hundreds of tired Americans, Swedes, Norwegians and others reached Cyprus' port of Larnaca aboard a Norwegian car ferry, the Hual Transporter, shortly before dawn.

The evacuation was being conducted by air, land and sea.

At least 126 Americans, 813 Swedes and 116 Norwegians were evacuated on the Haul. Others included Canadians, Finns and about 30 or so Lebanese, said Sigvald Haude, an employee with the Norwegian Foreign Ministry.

The US State Department estimates some 25,000 US nationals in Lebanon; France says it has 20,000 and Britain 22,000.

On Tuesday, a Greek cruise ship carrying about 700 French citizens and others—many of them women and children, arrived in Larnaca. Another Greek ship carrying about 265 people docked early Wednesday.

An Italian warship brought more than 300 Italians and other Westerners to Cyprus.

The Danish Foreign Ministry said it expects to have shuttled 1,700 people with a Danish passport or Danish residence permit back home, mainly through Syria.

Poland began the evacuation of about 200 of its citizens. They were being driven to Damascus for military flight back home, the defense ministry said.

Three ships carrying about 1,500 British and other European nationals arrived in Cyprus on Wednesday.

A British naval warship carrying about 170 mainly British nationals described as "priority medical cases" docked in the southern Cyprus port of Limassol at around 7 a.m.

The United Nations said on Tuesday its non-essential staff and family members would leave Lebanon, but relief workers would stay and more would go in.

Countries from as far away as Chile made arrangements to reach their citizens. A Brazilian air force plane collected about 100 Brazilians who had reached Turkey from Beirut. Canada said it would start evacuating its citizens by sea on Wednesday.

Thousands of foreign passport holders were trying to escape by car and bus over land to Damascus, despite warnings that the road has been targeted by Israeli warplanes.

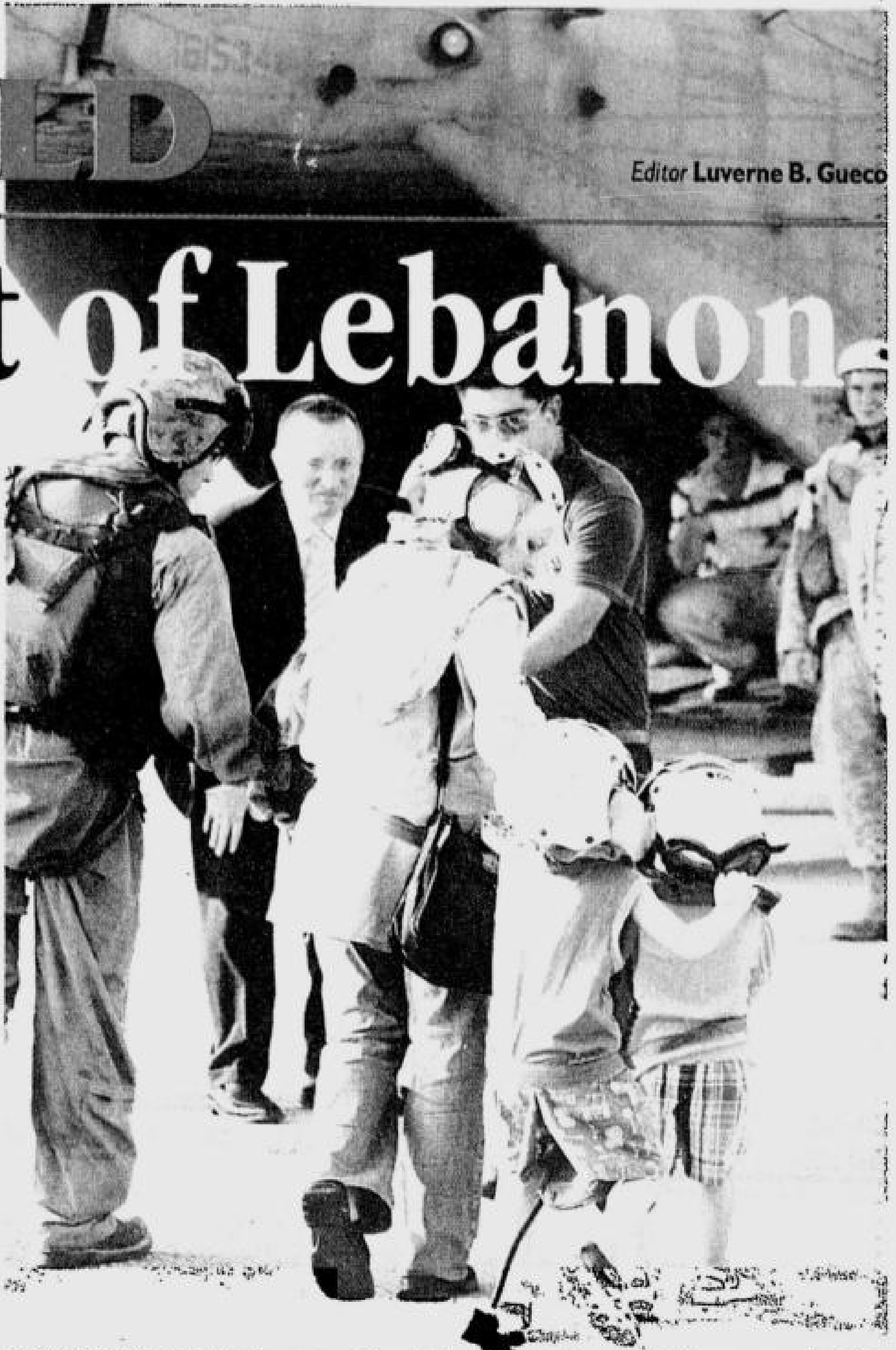
About 200 Belgians waited to get on buses from Beirut to the Syrian border. "I got the green light from the Israelis," Belgian consul Karina Tuytschaever told Reuters.

The United States ordered nine warships to waters off the Lebanese coast amid fears of possible terrorist attacks on ships evacuating US nationals, officials said.

More than 2,400 Americans are to be evacuated by air and sea on Wednesday. The Pentagon expects to bring 8,000 US citizens out in total.

Six British ships, including two aircraft carriers, stood by to rescue Britons. The destroyer HMS Gloucester reached Cyprus on Wednesday with 180 people from Beirut.

Sweden was collecting 1,500 people early on Wednesday, while a Spanish airforce Boeing 707 flew 113 people out of Damascus and more than 152 were being transported from Amman. *AP, AFP, Reuters*



US MARINES assist in the evacuation of American citizens by helicopters at the US Embassy in Awkar, north of Beirut, July 18. REUTERS

Watching bombs from the bar—a holiday in Beirut

LEBANESE-Swedish evacuees from Lebanon wait at the port of Mersin, in Turkey's Mediterranean coastal city, July 19. REUTERS

By Paul Hughes

BEIRUT—YOU KNOW YOUR HOLIDAY has taken a turn for the worse when the hotel slips a note under your door with directions to the bomb shelter.

Blissfully unaware and delighted to be going to our favorite Middle Eastern city, my wife and I reached Beirut just as Hizbollah militants seized two Israeli soldiers, sparking an Israeli military onslaught on Lebanon.

Instead of the exhausting nightlife and wonderful food we had anticipated in a city regaining its swagger after decades of war, we now had front-row seats on a show of Israeli firepower.

Within hours of our arrival, Israeli bombs had cratered the runways at Beirut's airport, easily visible from our hotel balcony on the Mediterranean coast.

Soon after, they began pounding Hizbollah strongholds in southern Beirut.

During Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war, foreign correspondents such as myself used to marvel at the ability of Beirut's hotels to keep them in pressed shirts and fine wine, even at the height of the fighting.

Now, here we were on the terrace of our hotel's piano bar as missiles crashed into a residential area that we overlooked.

Beirut is largely defenseless against Israeli air power. A few half-hearted bursts of anti-aircraft fire were barely enough to drown out the chanteuse stumbling through John Lennon's "Imagine."

The impeccable waiters, epitomizing the standards Lebanon's tourism trade tried to maintain in the dark days of civil war, hardly batted an eyelid as the ambulances wailed below.

"Another Caipirinha, sir?"

Before the bombing, the hotels were packed with wealthy Gulf tourists and Lebanese emigrés, and this was going to be their best summer for decades. Beirut had begun to believe it was at last recapturing its glory as the playground of the Middle East.

For all their stiff upper lips, the hotel staff, like most Lebanese, are devastated. The dream has gone again, amid pictures of dead and wounded, ruined buildings and bridges, and thousands of people sheltering in schools and parks.

By the time we decided to leave, three days after the fighting erupted, the hotel was virtually deserted.

Usually Damascus is a two-hour taxi ride from Beirut costing $100. On Saturday, the hotel concierge said he could find us only one driver willing to risk the trip, and he wanted $1,000.

We managed to locate a driver we knew from our previous trips, and set off through the deserted streets.

Suddenly a police motorcyclist came speeding towards us and frantically waved us off onto a side road. An Israeli warplane had just shelled the highway we were travelling on. The next five minutes were a heart-thumping blur as our driver sped insanely fast along back roads, nervously scanning the sky.

When we rejoined the highway, the rubble of the missile strike was just a couple of hundred yards down the road. But for us tourists at least, the border was in sight. *Reuters*

UN resolution to curb Iran nuke program

UNITED NATIONS—MAJOR POWERS BEGAN work on Tuesday on a UN Security Council resolution that would demand Iran suspend uranium enrichment as well as temporarily halt construction on a reactor that can produce plutonium.

The draft under consideration is an updated version of one introduced by the United States, Britain and France in early May but never adopted. It includes threats of sanctions to curb Iran's nuclear program, which the West fears is a prelude to bomb-making.

The text will also set a date, not yet determined but possibly within 30 days, for Iran to comply, according to one Western participant in the closed-door talks.

Tuesday's meeting included Germany and the five Security Council members with veto power—the United States, Britain, France, Russia and China, the main negotiators on Iran.

US Ambassador John Bolton said the session sort of "fizzled" because Russia and China were not "prepared to discuss the substance." Participants at the meeting said envoys from both nations said they had not yet received instructions.

Another round of consultations was scheduled for Wednesday, "so we are starting to work on a resolution," said French UN Ambassador Jean-Marc de la Sabliere, this month's Security Council president.

At a July 12 meeting in Paris, all six countries agreed Iran had given no indication it would engage seriously on a commercial and technological incentive package offered to Tehran if it were willing to suspend its nuclear programs.

The six agreed to adopt a Security Council resolution that would make the suspension mandatory.

If Iran still refused, they said, "we will work for adoption of measures under Article 41 of Chapter 7 of the UN Charter," which calls for sanctions.

But the Paris text leaves open whether Russia and China will agree to eventually adopt punitive measures. *Reuters*

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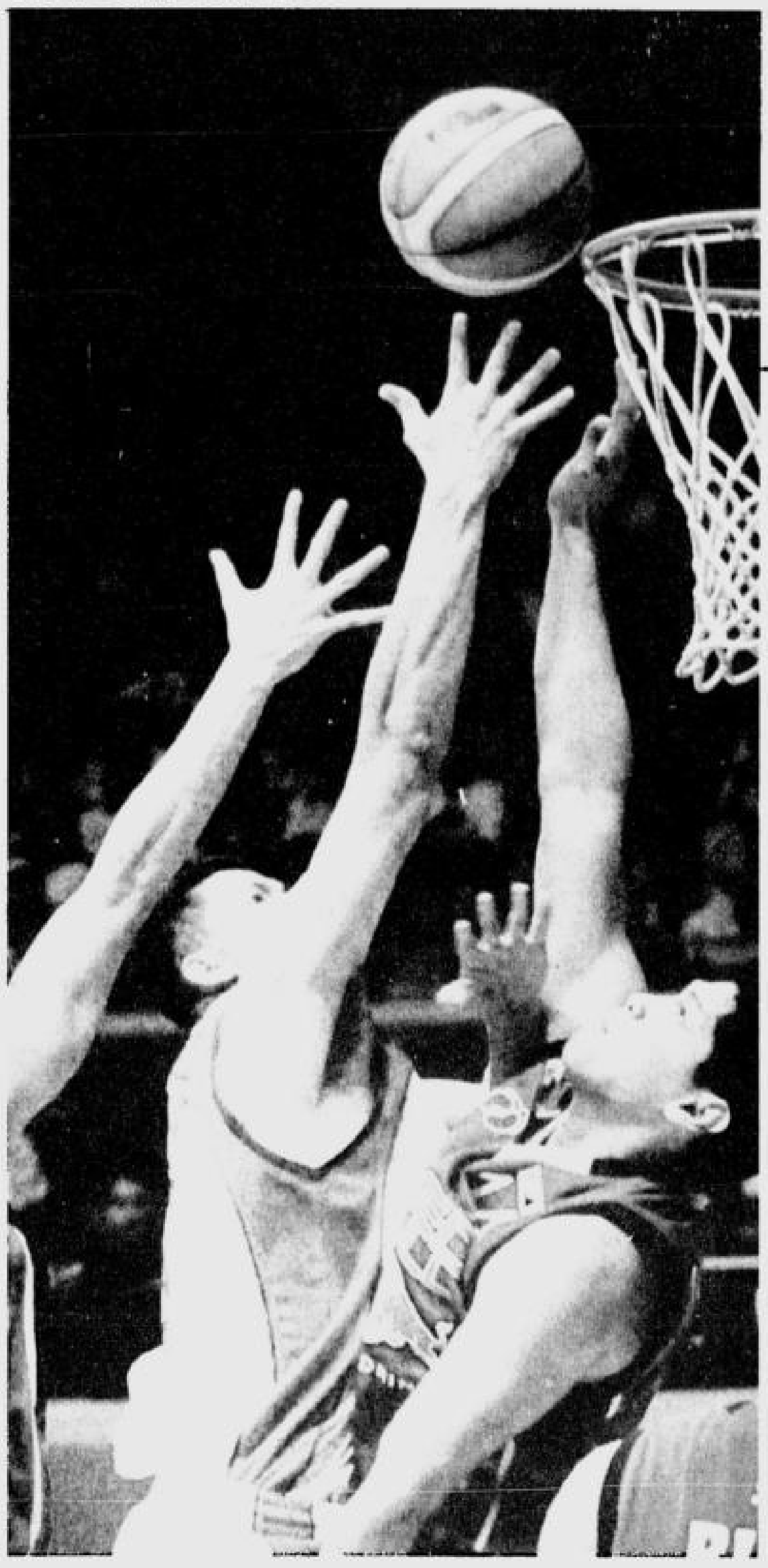

PBA FINALS: Purefoods' Jun Limpot drives against Red Bull's Enrico Villanueva (right) in Game 5 of last night's PBA Finals. ERIK ARAZAS

SPORTS

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Landis retakes yellow jersey in Tour de France /A24

RP-Air21 cagers rip Singapore in HK tilt

HONG KONG—RP-AIR 21 flexed its muscle just hard enough but still came out with an easy 105-71 win over lightweight Singapore at the start of the 15th Eastcolight-Super Kung Sheung Cup international invitational basketball championship at the Hong Kong Coliseum here Tuesday.

The win installed the 2006 PBA Fiesta Cup third placer as one of the early favorites in the tough, eight-nation tournament.

Led by Homer Se and Mark Telan, the Filipinos took it easy in the first half before pouring it on with a 23-2 run at the start of the third quarter for a commanding 69-39 lead.

The Filipinos, who are also being supported by Burlington, Accel and Federal Tyres, were never threatened from there.

"We don't want to take any chances (against Singapore)," said RP-Air21 assistant coach Johny Tam, who was allowed by head coach Bo Perasol to call the shots. "The boys are really determined to win as many games as possible and even bring home the championship.

GAMES THURSDAY *(Hong Kong Coliseum)*
3 p.m.—Japan vs Singapore
4:30 p.m.—China vs Thailand
7 p.m.—US vs RP-Air21
8:30 p.m.—Hong Kong vs Malaysia

"Actually, we did not have enough time to get together to prepare before the tournament, but the boys still played very well," added Tam, who dedicated the team's newest triumph on the international front to FedEx/Air21 head Bert Lina.

In other opening-day matches, defending champion Hong Kong subdued China, 70-64; the United States demolished Japan, 114-76; and Malaysia nipped Thailand, 60-58.

Outgoing Fiba president Carl Men Ky Ching formally opened the tournament assisted by Hong Kong Basketball Association (HKBA) president Lee Kwan Wok.

The eight participating countries were divided into two groups with the top two teams advancing to the crossover knockout semis. The winners of the semis will dispute the title in a winner-take-all encounter. Se finished with a team-high 17 points while Telan added 16 points, 10 of them in the final period.

Three other players—Ronald Tubid, Bruce Dacia and Stephen Padilla—also scored in double figures. Tubid added 14 points, Dacia contributed 11 and Padilla had 10.

Yancy de Ocampo and K.G. Canaleta, two of four Air21's mainstays who played in the 2006 William Jones Cup tournament in Taiwan last week, had eight points each.

The Filipinos routed the Singaporeans off the boards, 51-27, with Telan grabbing 13 boards and Ranidel de Ocampo seven.

The Filipinos also had more assists (21-12) and steals (15-10).

They also shot better from the floor, hitting 32 of 62 attempts for a respectable 51.6 percent shooting compared to the Singaporeans' 32.6 percent (46 of 71).

Koh Meng Koon and Wong Soon Yuh led Singapore with 22 and 18 points, respectively.

The scores:

RP-AIR21 105—Se 17, Telan 16, Tubid 14, Dacia 11, Padilla 10, Y. De Ocampo 8, Canaleta 8, Avenido 7, Arboleda 5, R. De Ocampo 5, Bernardo 4.

SINGAPORE 71—Koh Meng Koon 22, Wong Soon Yuh 18, Wong Wei Long 13, Pathman Matlalakan 4, Chieng Lie 3, Wei Qing 2, Koo Kian Hua 2, Hong Wei 2, Jia Ren 2, Oh Wei Jie 2, Sim Keng Long 1.

Quarters: 24-17, 46-37, 76-50, 105-71.

RP jins joining World Junior tourney

THE PETRON NATIonal taekwondo team will compete in the 2006 World Junior Taekwondo Championships slated in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, on July 24-30.

The 17-jin team, according to Philippine Taekwondo Association president Robert N. Aventajado, is one of 80 countries vying in the prestigious tournament.

The others include Korea, Chinese-Taipei, the United States, China, Germany, Turkey, France, Spain and Iran.

"The trip gives our athletes a much needed international exposure," said Aventajado.

Composing Team Philippines are:

Men—Gyle Michael Genoso, Paolo Miguel Angeles, Nicole Mapilisan, R-Jay del Rosario, Andrew Clemente, Dennis Rocel Resaba, Raffy de Jesus, Vladimir Baniqued and Clarence Nicole Virtudazo.

Women—Crystal Pauline Reyes, Ma. Daphne Alindogan, Karla Jane Alava, Izel Carmel Masungsong, Rublyn Mapa, Marili Violeta Gadit, Kirstie Elaine Alora and Emron Mae Golding.

The officials are Stephen Fernandez, delegation head; Jesus Morales III, team manager; Victor Emmanuel Veneracion, men's coach; and Roberto Cruz, women's coach.

PTA vice president and World Taekwondo Federation executive council member Sung Chon Hong will attend the council meeting on July 23-27 while international referee Ricardo Santiago Jr. will officiate in the tournament.

The Filipinos' trip is supported by the Philippine Sports Commission, Petron and Accel.

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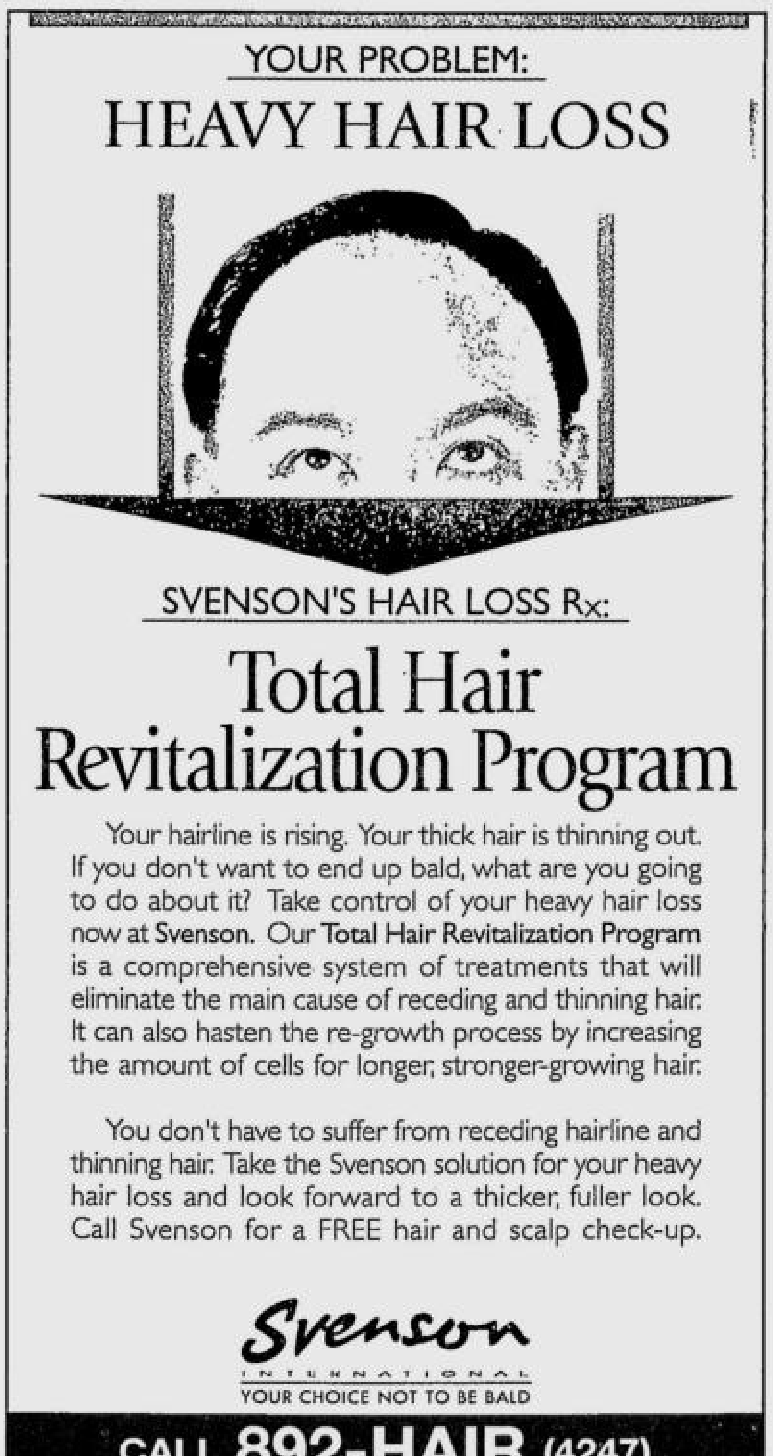

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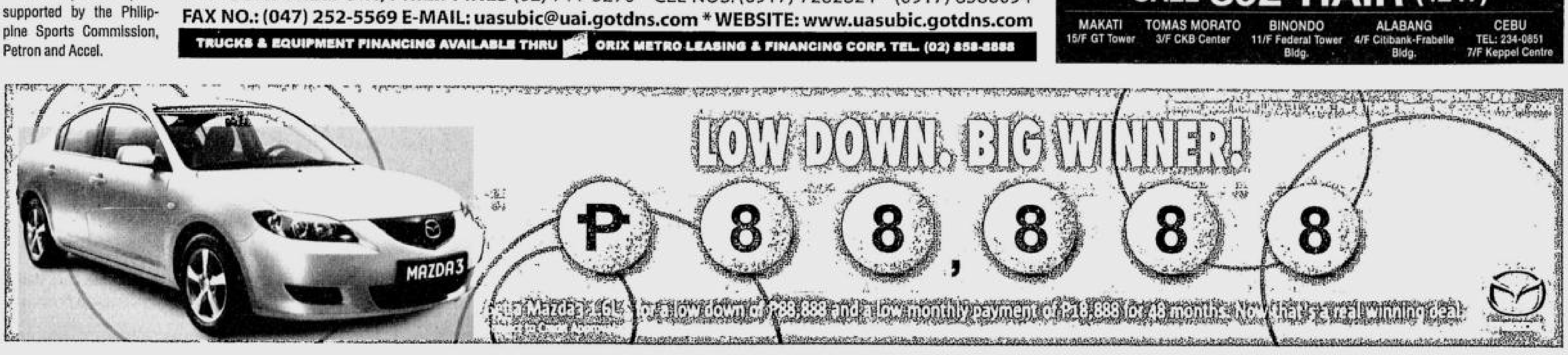

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Pagadian routs Ozamiz, nears NBC crown

PAGADIAN CITY—EXPANSION TEAM Pagadian routed defending champion Ozamiz Cotta, 97-80, Tuesday night to draw first blood in their best-of-three series for the 2006 Guerrero Brandy-NBC national basketball title at the city gym here.

Mayor Sammy Co's Explorers pushed Ozamiz frontliners Marlon Basco and Billy Bansil away from their comfort zones to move within a victory of clinching the crown in their debut in the nationwide tournament.

The Ozamiz gunners were miserable in offense, especially from the 3-point territory, where they canned only one of 15 attempts.

"Right from the start, we pushed Billy (Bansil) and Marlon (Basco) away from their comfort zones, and let their shooters attempt for the perimeter," said Pagadian coach Segundo "Bong" dela Cruz. "Luckily, the strategy worked."

Basco and Bansil combined only for 7-of-20 shooting as Mayor Reynaldo Parojinog's Cotta Shrine Cagers fell behind by as many as 32 points, 89-57, at the start of the final canto.

The Explorers led from start to finish but they broke away only in the third period, when they outgunned their rivals, 32-14.

Ex-pros Peter Naron and Bong Marata led Pagadian with 22 points apiece. Marata shot 3-of-4 from the 3-point arc and 9-of-10 from the stripes.

Backcourt partners Michael Orquillas and Lou Gatumbato also contributed with a combined 26 points.

The Explorers can end the series today when they meet Ozamiz anew at the Gov. Angel Medina Sr. gym in Ozamiz City.

Dela Cruz is out to settle the score with Ozamiz, which beat FEI-Cavite, then handled by Dela Cruz, in last year's national finals.

"We have done what we have to do at home," said Dela Cruz. "The pressure is now on them but Ozamiz is capable of coming back."

Melfred Sampilo led Ozamiz with 15 points.

The tournament is sponsored by Panasonic, Sulpicio Lines, Nature's Spring, Molten, Spring Cooking Oil, Regent Foods, Firefly Lightings and Prime Channel.

The scores:

PAGADIAN 97—Marata 22, Naron 22, Orquillas 16, Gatumbato 10, Daja 8, Singedas 7, Singco 5, Salud 4, Ayuk 3, Unabia 0, Dayota 0, Cortez 0, Quilo 0, Omandam 0, Pamaran 0.

OZAMIZ 80—Sampilo 15, Basco 13, Delina 12, Ilanga 12, Bansil 8, Yabut 6, Alberto 4, Lapera 2, Cavan 2, Caylan 2, Mario Basco 2, Llangco 2, Guerrero 0, Libatog 0, Alvarado 0.

Quarters: 24-15, 50-43, 82-57, 97-80.

Lions rip Altas for fifth win

By Marc Anthony Reyes

YOUSIF ALJAMAL SCATTERED A GAME-HIGH 23 POINTS BUT IT was Samuel Ekwe who provided pretty much of everything as San Beda ripped Perpetual Help, 61-45, last night for its fourth straight victory in the NCAA men's basketball tournament at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

The veteran forward Aljamal piled up points as the Perpetual defense collapsed on the 6-foot-8 Ekwe, who still came through with 13 markers on top of 22 rebounds.

The Red Lions, who dominated both boards, 54-37, improved to 5-1 while handing the Altas their sixth loss against two wins.

GAMES TOMORROW
(Ninoy Aquino Stadium)
12 nn – PCU vs St. Benilde (Jrs/Srs)
4 p.m. – Letran vs Mapua (Srs)

San Sebastian College-Recoletos finished strong in subduing Jose Rizal, 95-86, to move up to 3-4 while pulling JRU back to the cellar with a 1-5 slate.

The Heavy Bombers, inspired by their maiden victory last Monday over St. Benilde, pulled ahead by as many as 15 points, 65-50, in the third quarter.

But the Stags mounted a last-ditch rally starring Miguel Lindaya, who hit 10 of his 17 points in the last period.

"I'm glad the rest of the guys stepped up especially Mike (Lindaya)," said SSC-R coach Raymund Valenzona, who missed the services of slotman Jason Ballesteros and playmaker Franz Delgado.. "We are lacking in key men but still came out with solid stand.'

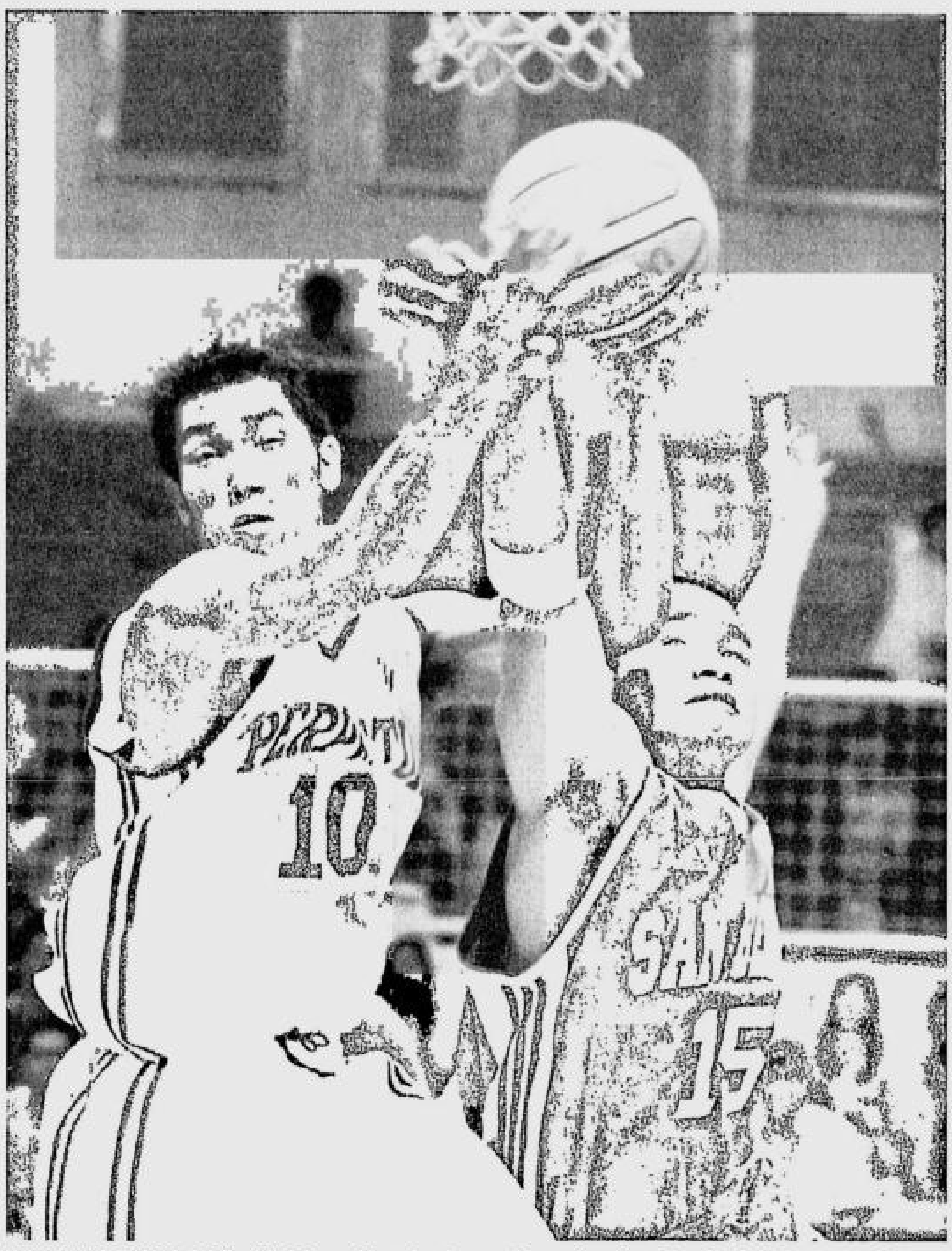
Alvin Se didn't see action for JRU after being slapped with a one-game suspension for "unsportsmanlike behavior and provocative gesture" during their game against St. Benilde last Monday.

It was a double for SSC-R as the Staglets rolled back the Light Bombers, 79-76. San Beda also scored a sweep as the Cubs mangled the Altalettes, 100-59.

The senior scores:

SECOND GAME

SSC-R 95 – Aquino 22, Lindaya 17, Vicente 16, Viray 15, Raymundo 11, Bulawan 7, Quiamco 4, De Leon 2, Najorda 1, Juan 0, Sagad 0.



PERPETUAL Help's Virgillo Manuel battles for a rebound against San Beda's Rogemar Menor in their game yesterday held at Ninoy Aquino coliseum. RYAN LIM

JRU 86 – Dedicatoria 25, Pradas 16, Cagoco 15, Nocom 13, Wilson 8, Fenequito3, Sena 2, Hayes 2, Bucao 2, Pria 0, Echane 0, Caspe 0, Callan 0.

Quarters: 20-20, 38-45, 59-65, 95-86.

THIRD GAME

SAN BEDA 61 – Aljamal 23, Ekwe 13, Gamalinda 7, Escobal 6, Menor 5, Tecson 3, Maggay 2, Angeles 1, Hermida 1, Espinosa 0, Taganas 0, Canlas 0, Evangelista 0, Antonio 0, Taupa 0.

PERPETUAL 45 – Misa 14, Joe 12, Kong 7, Galabin 5, Bauzon 3, Racho 2, Mendoza 2, Reyes 0, Perturbos 0, Manuel 0, Lee 0.

Quarters: 18-8, 31-19, 40-31 61-45.

Intense NBI watch back in 'NC' games

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION has intensified its game-fixing watch by fielding a "full contingent" during yesterday's NCAA men's basketball tournament four-game bill at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

NCAA management committee chair Bernie Atienza of host St. Benilde didn't want to reveal the number of NBI agents who were present but confirmed that they were in full force after reports of renewed game-fixing came out in the papers.

"We still rely on them (NBI) with regard to the (game-fixing) problem," said Atienza. "We need their full cooperation which NBI, in fairness to them. generously provides us."

He added that some NBI agents were "hurt" by the INQUIRER report that their assigned agents were not there when the "suspects" surfaced Monday night during the Jose Rizal-St. Benilde game.

"They have assigned 12 agents to cover the games but that doesn't mean that they have to be here all the time. They also take turns," said Atienza, who talked to the media men covering the games along with league commissioner Jun Bernardino.

Suspicions of game-fixing were raised when a group of persons near the playing area were seen furiously making multiple phone calls in the closing seconds of the JRU-St. Benilde match won by the Heavy Bombers by two points after leading by as many as 17 points. The game was not televised but Atienza said the league has a videotape of the game taken by the league staff.

Marc Anthony Reyes

POC approves 187 athletes for Doha Asiad

THE PHILIPPINE OLYMPIC COMMITTEE yesterday approved an initial list of 187 athletes who will compete in the Doha Asian Games in Qatar this December.

The Asian Games Task Force had recommended 192 but five athletes were withdrawn at the last minute.

However, the roster is expected to go past the 200 mark with 14 more athletes from five sports expected to meet the Asiad criteria. Hoping to eventually make it are five wrestlers, three each from shooting and karatedo, two from tennis and one from judo.

POC president Peping Cojuangco, who presided over the expanded POC executive council meeting, said teams sports like softball, water polo and basketball may join the roster and were given until September to make the cut.

The PSC earlier announced it would fund the country's Asiad campaign to the tune of P30 million.

Marc Anthony Reyes

CHESS OFFICIALS: Sheik Sultan Din Khalifa Al-Nahyan, president of the Asia Chess Federation, with deputy president Toti Abundo (left) of the Philippines during the last Chess Olympiad in Turin, Italy.

Abap executive asks DepEd to focus on amateur boxing

BAGUIO CITY—THE GOVERNMENT must take a serious look at the state of the country's amateur boxing before it even dreams of producing another Manny Pacquiao from the ranks of public schools, a boxing official here said.

"There are a lot of promising boxers in our high schools but efforts to tap their potentials are being eclipsed by the bias of attention given to professional boxing," said Dr. Charles Cheng, Cordillera president of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines..

The review of amateur boxing, he said, must start with increasing the P15-million annual ABAP budget and overhauling the system of choosing national coaches.

Cheng's statements came in the wake of the Department of Education's proposal to include boxing in the public school curriculums, particularly in high school.

He said that if education officials were serious about their plan, they should start with the mindset that before an aspiring professional boxer hits the big time, he must undergo a rigid amateur boxing career.

"Cuban and Mexican boxers dominate international events because their amateur training is solid," said Cheng, who also heads the Baguio Amateur Sports Improvement Council. Delmar Cariño, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Milo Marathon Bacolod elims kick off Sunday

THE 30TH NATIONAL MILO MARATHON RESUMES its nationwide elimination races this Sunday with Bacolod hosting the 11th leg in Negros Occidental.

Organizers expect a wide open race for the top three positions in the men's and women's division of the 21K race with crack runners from the two Negros provinces joining the field.

Julius Sermona, a member of the national training pool, is expected to be challenged anew by Eric Panique and Anthony Babiera from Himamaylan City and Rene Desuyo from Cadiz City.

Last year's qualifier Irene Apuhin and Cherry Bautista lead the women's roster.

Runners who made it to the top 10 in the 21K and 5K races this year in the nearby cities of Dumaguete, Tagbilaran and Roxas are no longer qualified to join the Bacolod leg according to Milo Sports Events Executive Pat Goc-ong.

A total of P144,600 in cash is at stake Sunday while Milo jackets, caps, basketballs, a cell phone and P15,000 will be raffled off to the public on race day.

The event is held in partnership with Cebu Pacific, Bayview Park Hotel-Manila, Adidas and Powerbar.

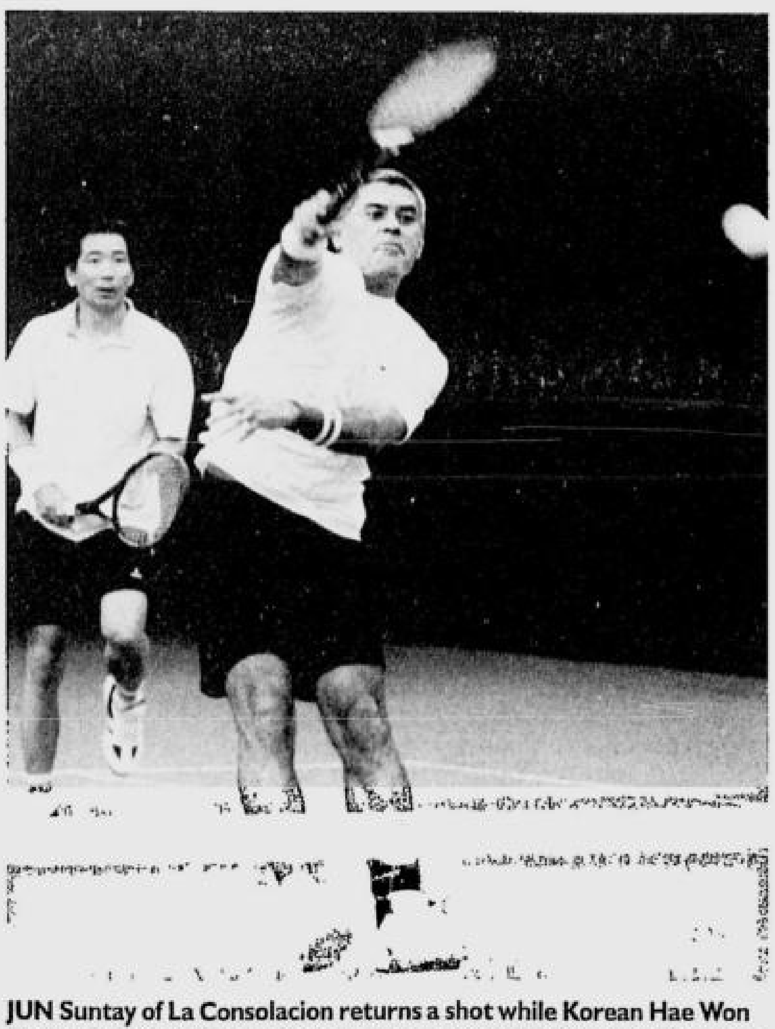
Invited to fire the starting gun at 6 a.m. in front of the Capitol Bldg. is Mayor Evelio Bing Leonardia. Gov. Joseph Maranon has also been invited to grace the awarding rites right after the race together with Rep. Monico Puentevella. Singer Leo Valdez will join the 5K run.

Aside from the 21K and 5K races, the early morning festivities will include an inter-school cheer-dance competition, the inter-school running competition and the biggest delegation contest.

A 3K age-group race will also be held for children 6-9 and 10-12 years old.

National race director Rudy Biscocho is advising all participants to wear the t-shirts given to them upon registration as requirement for joining the race and for security purposes.

Last week, more than 12,000 runners participated in the NCR leg won by two-time Olympian Eduardo Buenavista and Aileen Tolentino of Cagayan de Oro.



JUN Suntay of La Consolacion returns a shot while Korean Hae Won Soe looks on in their doubles match against PCA's Conrado Francisco and Bing Tomas in the 45 and above division.

PCA snaps Laco netters' winning streak

STANDINGS	W	L
PCA	5	0
La Co	5	1
Mandaluyong	3	2
Mandaluyong Lawn Tennis	2	3
Valle Verde	2	3
Capitol	1	4
Eusebio	0	5

DEFENDING CHAMPION PHILIPPINE Columbian Association snapped La Consolacion Tennis Club's five-game winning streak with a 5-2 victory last Saturday to wrest the lead in the second Prince Home and Away Invitational Team Tennis tournament at the PCA indoor shellcourts.

PCA banked on Raul Saberon and Albert Chiu (55 & above), Bing Tomas and Conrad Francisco (45 & above), Hanky Lee and Aldrin Geluz and Charlie Niu and Dennis Profeta (35 & above), and Julius Kraut and Raymond Villarete (Open), while Pio Tolentino and Dennis Sianson (Open) and Luz Maestrado and Cecil Araos (Ladies) scored Laco's two points.

Games Saturday
1 p.m. – PCA vs Valle Verde
1 p.m. – Eusebio vs Capitol
2 p.m. – Mandaluyong vs MLTC

PCA and Laco, which also posted identical 5-2 wins over Capitol Tennis Club and Valle Verde Country Club last Sunday, both secured semifinal berths while the remaining five teams remain in the hunt for quarterfinal slots with a weekend left in the tournament sponsored by Yellow Cab Pizza.

Food poisoning report out soon

THE PHILIPPINE CENTER FOR SPORTS Medicine will release its findings on the food poisoning incident involving national athletes next week.

Philippine Sports Commission chair Butch Ramirez, meanwhile, said he will not hesitate to file administrative charges against any PSC employee who will be found accountable for the incident.

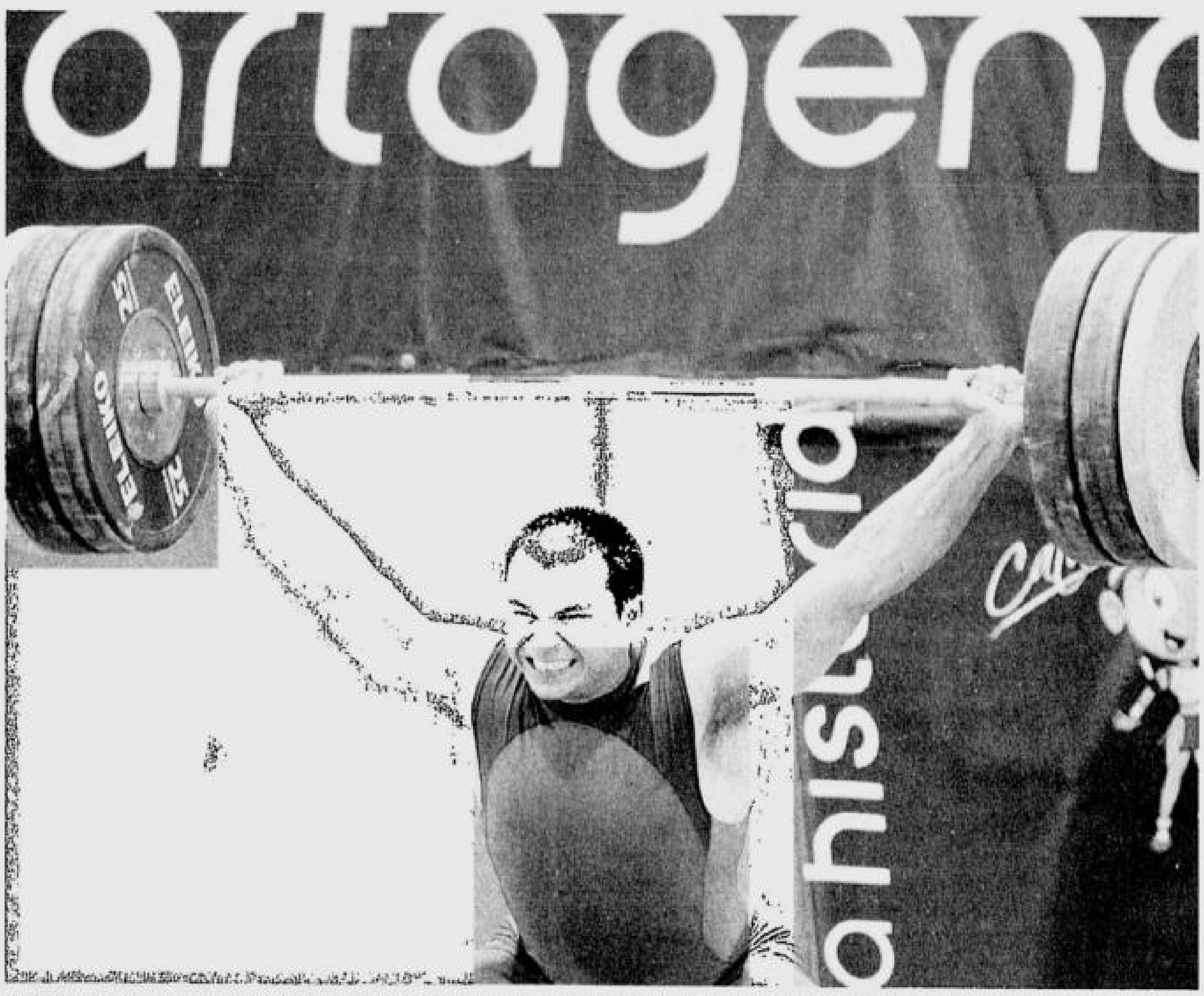
"We are seriously looking into the cause of this incident," Ramirez said. "Serving food during meetings has always been our gesture to show hospitality to our guests. It was not our intention to inflict harm on our athletes."

Over 60 athletes and PSC officials suffered from food poisoning after being served snacks during a meeting held at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex last Friday.

Charges against the restaurant that catered the meeting are slim since the food served had already been disposed of.

Four athletes were taken to the hospital but were subsequently released after given proper medical attention.

"Food poisoning may sound alarming, but it is a self-limiting illness," said PCSM medical officer Dr. Raul Alcantara. "What we did was to rehydrate the patients for the bodily fluids that they lost. Most cases suffered from mild to moderately dehydration."



CHAMPION: Hector Ballesteros of Colombia wins the gold with a lift of 163 kilos in the 85-kg class of the weightlifting competition of the Central American and Caribbean Games in Cartagena, Colombia, Tuesday. AP

Bacolod softball officials US TNTs

BACOLOD CITY—FOR THE FIRST TIME since 1998, traditional powerhouse Paglaum Village National High School from Bacolod City did not qualify in any division in the 2006 World Series.

And team officials, led by controversial coach Reynaldo "Guy" Fuentes, who went to the United States last year for the squad's aborted World Series stint in Delaware, have yet to return to the Philippines, PVNHS principal Benjamin Barredo said in a telephone interview Monday.

"They (team officials) are already overstaying in the US," said Barredo, who headed the 2005 delegation that left 11 months ago, leaving behind nine of the 12 players who were supposed to see action in the Senior League championships from Aug. 7-14, 2005.

PVNHS brought home the 2003 Junior League World Series from Kirkland, Washington. The same team also finished third in the Senior League World Series in Delaware a year later.

But with its top coach opting to stay in the US, Paglaum was noticeably absent in the Philippine Series in April.

Two Bacolod teams in Domingo Lacson National High School and Education Training Center School-DLNHS will represent the Asia-Pacific in the Senior League and Junior League divisions in Lower Sussex, Delaware and Kirkland, Washington, respectively, next month.

Raise funds

Barredo, who left for the United States along with Fuentes and three other team officials on Aug. 4 after securing their US visas the day before, said they went ahead to raise funds for the rest of the delegation.

But with time running out in the fund-raising drive, Paglaum waived its slot in the World Series and the players returned to Bacolod, prompting an investigation by the Department of Education and the City Council.

Barredo returned to the country Aug. 31 with three players—Fuentes' daughter, Rachel, Christine Jade Declines and Carina Claver, whose sister Christian Mae also played in the 2004 World Series but was asked to stay behind by her foster parent.

The principal said Fuentes and the rest of the team officials were issued six-month visas.

Declines' father, Emmanuel, was part of the 2005 delegation as official representative of Bacolod Vice Mayor Renecito Novero.

The Department of Foreign Affairs has instructed the Philippine Embassy in the US to include in its watch list the names of the 10 persons who stayed in the US, even after the World Series competitions from 2003 to 2005.

Among them is Fuentes, his wife, Teresita—who gained a US visa when she was included in the delegation for the 2003 Softball World Cup in Lakewood, Florida —and son, Francis, a member of the 2005 PVNHS World Series coaching staff.

When coach Fuentes left for the US, he not only left behind his players but a trail of debt as well, while Francis Fuentes is facing charges of grave threat in Bacolod.

Fr. Antonio Limchayco, vice president for external affairs of the University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos, Wednesday said coach Fuentes has yet to pay arrears amounting to P434,353.90 to a Cebu-based travel agency for the airfare of seven persons including his wife, to Lakewood, Florida, where UNO-R, bannered by PVNHS players, competed in the 2003 Softball World Cup.

Fuentes had claimed responsibility for the unsettled account and vowed to pay the amount in an Oct. 4, 2004 meeting with Limchaypo and Travelways official Michael Tex Carvajal.

Also in the list are 2005 World Series delegation officials Edwin Abellana, Marilyn Parcia and 2003 World Series contingent members Antonio "Jack" Kilayko, Grace Zaragosa and Roselo Javellana. *Cedelf P. Tupas, Christian Irl Tan*

Eagles clash with Falcons; Tams battle Tigers today

THE ATENEO BLUE EAGLES HAVE learned that an overdose of confidence can be harmful.

The Eagles, who got a reality check in their first match, will gun for a third straight victory versus the Adamson Falcons at 2 p.m. today at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

"Maybe we went into that first game thinking we're better than what we really are, so we got a rude awakening from NU," said coach Norman Black, citing Ateneo's unconvincing 75-70 win against the Bulldogs.

The awakening seemed to have helped. The Eagles hammered out a more stylish victory against the University of the Philippines Maroons in their next game.

Meanwhile, the defending champion Far Eastern U Tamaraws try to regroup after a 92-84 overtime defeat to preseason favorite University of the East, their first in the post-Arwind Santos era.

The Tamaraws hope to use that loss as a wake-up call as they shoot for their first win against the Sto. Tomas Tigers at 4 p.m.

The Tigers suffered a major blow early in their campaign when veteran guard Jemal Vizcarra went down with a hamstring injury in the Tigers' 92-94 loss to UP.

Yet UST coach Pido Jarencio believes Jojo Duncil, Francis Allera and Dylan Ababou can easily fill in for the starting guard.

Freshman center Jervy Cruz also showed promise, debuting with a team-high 16 points, 15 rebounds and two blocks.

"We have a deep bench, we're not worried," said Jarencio.

After barely getting past the Bulldogs in the season opener, the Eagles looked more prepared in their 98-89 triumph over the Maroons last Sunday.

"We watched how UP play against UST and we knew that it's not going to be an easy game," said Black. "We wanted to establish in the game that we can win slow, we can win fast."

Black expects another tough match from the Falcons, who are coming off an 88-64 rout versus NU.

Shooter Patrick Cabahug paced Adamson with 22 points and 15 rebounds, while center Ken Bono was equally impressive with 20 markers and 15 boards.

"They looked good against NU," noted Black. "Bono got off to a good start so he's going to be a handful in the middle. And their guards played quite well too, their shooters really connected from the outside."

Ranged against the more seasoned Eagles, Adamson coach Leo Austria still thinks his team has a fair chance.

"I hope that my players continue to believe in themselves," said Austria. "We've seen the games of the other teams. Not many of the teams are as strong as UE. The barometer this season is UE. I think the players realized that they have a chance, that's why they're very motivated." *Jasmine W. Payo*

STANDINGS	W	L
UE	2	0
Ateneo	2	0
UP	1	1
Adamson	1	1
UST	0	1
FEU	0	1
NU	0	2

GAMES TODAY
(*Ninoy Aquino Stadium*)
2 p.m.—Adamson vs Ateneo (Srs)
4 p.m.—UST vs FEU (Srs)

SPORTSWATCH

Spalding bares 'hot' basketball designs

SPALDING IS INTRODUCING TWO UNIQUE BASKETBALLS AT THE NBA MADness 2006 as part of its continuing efforts to promote innovation in one of the world's biggest markets for basketball. Spalding, through its exclusive Philippine distributor Proline Sports Center Inc., has made available locally the "Heat Seeker" and the "Helix" basketball lines. Proline will showcase the Heat Seeker and the Helix at its booth at the NBA Madness at the Araneta Coliseum from July 20 to 22.

Meralco shuttlers score shutout

MERALCO ROUTED MANILA BULLETIN IN THE CORPORATE CLASSIC MONDAY in the fourth Sportshouse and Dunlop Corporate Badminton Cup at the Club Sixfifty in Libis and SM Megamall. The mixed doubles pair of Alex Cuevas and Dianah Barbo outplayed O'donnel Palomo and Dhalie del Rio, 21-4, 21-13, to compete Meralco's 5-0 blanking of Bulletin in the Classic Division. But Meralco missed posting a double win as it lost to Philippine Star, 2-3, in the Masters.

Pasay derby stakes P2 million

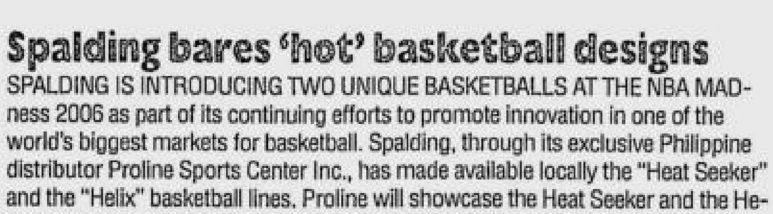
PASAY CITY COCKPIT PRESENTS THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY 5- COCK DERBY on July 24, 26 and 28 with a guaranteed prize of P2 million. Sponsor is Sagupaan Complexor 3000. The event has already attracted more than 100 entries with cockhouse reservations as of yesterday. According to pit managers Eric dela Rosa, Butchoy Olano and Roming Vergara, each participant who will score two points in the elimination round will get P10,000. A brand- new Honda Wave awaits the fastest win champion. For details, call 843-1890, 843-1746 and 816-6750.

Roligon derby: 68 fights today

SIXTY–EIGHT FIERCE MATCHES WILL BE PARADED TODAY AT THE 15,000–seat Roligon Mega Cockpit via the special 3-cock derby presented by Lakpue Drug Inc. and Thunderbird Enertone. A prize of P300,000 is put up by hosts Abraham Bernales, Tiling Capitan and Mario Gujelde. Entry fee is P4,400. The fastest win champion will get P20,000. On Aug. 1, 3 and 5, the Motorcycle Festival 4-cock derby takes place with P1 million in guaranteed prize for a pot money of P6,600. For details, call 851-2275; 833- 1638 and 852-9812.

LPC One-Cock Ulutan stakes P400,000

UP TO P400,000 IN PRIZES WILL BE UP FOR GRABS TODAY AT LAS PIÑAS COLiseum as the 200-entry Super Fastest Win One- Cock Ulutan gets going at 8 a.m. According to hosts Mario and Pilo Nablo, a fastest win champion will be selected after every 10 fights and shall receive P10,000. Each winner will also get P1,000 as bonus. Set on July 27 is another Fastest Win event with coliseum manager Alex Tobias and Yoyoy Dahonog as hosts. Meanwhile, the annual Las Piñas 6-stag derby will be held on Aug. 24 and 26. For details, call 873-1040 and 874-3910.



DOUBLE PUNCH: Brothers Uly and Douglas Maningding scored a double punch for the Explorer Motorsports Team recently in the sixth leg of the Race Motorsports Slalom Grand Prix 2006. Uly posted the novice best time as he captured three titles while Douglas, 11, emerged champion in the Pro Stock A, Pro Stock B and 5A divisions.

Paref-Springdale bets lead Vismin Interscholastic golf

CEBU—ANGELO JOSE GANDIONCO FIRED 50 points to power Paref-Springdale to a 10-point lead in the boys' grade school at the start yesterday of the 2nd Samsung Vismin Interscholastic Golf Championships at the Cebu Country Club course here.

Counting the 32 of Martin Mendoza and the 7 of Jhan Bradlee Uy, Paref-Springdale totaled 89 to open up an early cushion over University of St. La Salle which had 79.

Sacred Heart paced the high school boys, CIE led the girls high-school/college play and Our Lady of Lourdes was on top of the girls elementary play in the tourney backed by KZG, Custom Clubmakers, Sunbolt, C-Lium Fibre, Taylormade, Titleist, Microtel Inn & Suites. Highlights of the event will be aired on Sports Plus.

Charles Daniel Uy scored 43 while Franz Ian Dy and Franz Josef Olead each had 41s as Sacred Heart raced to a 26-point spread and left behind Paref Springdale which had 99.

Gyung Hui Kim and Hannah Wong combined for 75 to lead Sacred Heart, which was paced by Stephanie Olea's 47.

The Our Lady of Lourdes tandem of Pamela Mariano and Taj Kaye Tabanas conspired for 35 points to go up by five over Sacred Heart-Hijas.

Leading the individual battles were Olea, Gandionco, Gabasa, Franz Dy, Louie Mariano, Chepe Dulay and Sunny Jong Chung.

Olea was up by one over Lovelyn Guigio of Xavier, Gandionco led teammate Mendoza by 18 while Gabasa took a 24-point spread over Tabanas. Mariano shot a 40 and paced boys college play by 14. Dulay (50) led boys high school while Dy and Chung paced the special division.

Marcelo strikes in Karting Invitational

STEFANO MARCELO EMERGED victorious in the third round of the 2006 Rotax Invitational Challenge held recently at the Carmona Circuit Philippines in Cavite.

The 14-year-old grandson of '70s formula car star Eddie Marcelo and son of former national jetski champion John showed superb feel and control in wet and slippery conditions to cop the first win of his two-year career.

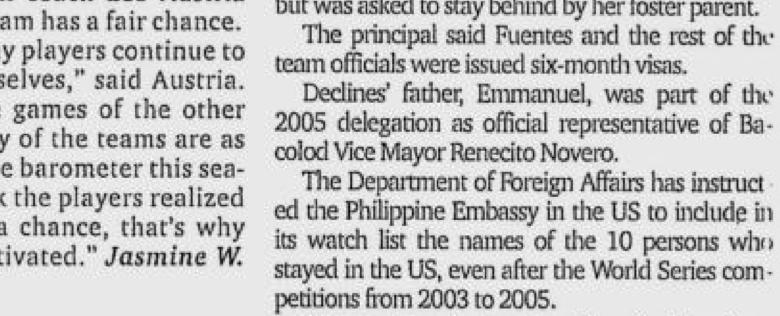
In the final, Marcelo led from start to finish and earned P42,000.

Round 2 winner Ivan Carapiet suffered electrical problems and failed to finish. He, however, still leads the series.

Daniel Cleak took second place and P22,000 ahead of Indy Villalon, who took third place and P15,000.

Alessandra Madrigal, barely 10, checked in fourth despite a lack of grip, which plagued her throughout the race day. She won P10,000. Her Alessandra Racing teammate Maico Angeles finished fifth and got P7,500.

The event was sponsored by ING Banking, Pitts, Petron, Chicago City Day School, Ford Global City, Nissan Gallery and Klassik BMW.



TOP FIVE: (From left) Maico Angeles, fifth; Indy Villalon, third; Stefano Marcelo, winner; Daniel Cleak, second; and Alessandra Madrigal, fourth.

Duckpin tilt set at Marketplace July 22-30

THE PHILIPPINE DUCKPIN BOWLING council's anniversary and national charter day tournament will be held July 22-30 at the Marketplace Bowling & Billiards Center along Kalentong Street, Manadaluyong City.

PHIDBC president Inez G. Magbual expects another huge turnout from all over the country for the 31st anniversary kegfest and the fourth leg in the 2006 calendar of activities.

PHIDBC, which successfully staged the National Open championships in San Fernando, La Union recently, has received confirmation from club/associations from the North Luzon Triangle and the Bicol region for their participation.

The Baguio Benguet ladies' team led by Ms Flor Balagot and the MONLOU men's squad led by Bebot Detera is expected to come in full force in a bid to repeat its rare title sweep in the recent National Open.

The tournament is supported by the Philippine Olympic Committee, Advance Paper, Smart Communication, Monami Writing Instruments, 105.1 FM Crossover and Team Ventures.

Armstrong still mad at Tour's race director

L'ALPE D'HUEZ, FRANCE—LANCE ARMSTRONG is in no mood to forgive Tour de France race director Jean-Marie Leblanc.

"The problems and the tension there are so deep," Armstrong said on Tuesday. "I'm just not very optimistic."

After the seven-time Tour winner retired from cycling last summer, Leblanc heralded a fresh start for cycling, predicting an exciting time for Armstrong's longtime rival Jan Ullrich of Germany and the promising Ivan Basso of Italy.

But Basso, the 2005 Tour runner-up and 1997 Tour winner Ullrich were kicked out on the eve of this year's Tour, implicated in a Spanish doping investigation.

Although Armstrong "cares for them as friends," he used the scandal to hit back at Leblanc.

"I called Jean-Marie Leblanc the day all this news hit," Armstrong told a small group of reporters at a hotel in this Alpine mountain resort. "I said: 'Hey, I just wanted to wish you luck, sorry this happened. I know you were happy to see us move on. But this would never have happened on our watch ever.'"

Armstrong is not unfamiliar with doping allegations.

Last August, the French sports daily L'Equipe alleged Armstrong tested positive for the banned performance enhancer EPO during the 1999 Tour—the year of his first win. Leblanc reacted strongly, saying Armstrong had "fooled" the cycling world.

The relationship worsened last October when Leblanc announced the 2006 Tour route in Paris.

"I'll never forget as long as I live, Jean-Marie Leblanc's address," Armstrong said.

Mimicking, even mocking Leblanc, he continued in a soft, throaty voice.

"'It's time for the regime to end, the oppression of the Armstrong (era),'" said Armstrong.

Monday, sporting a slightly fuller figure than in his racing years, Armstrong relaxed in his own unique way—a couple of punishing bike rides up L'Alpe d'Huez, one of the most famed ascents in the Tour.

Cycling fans, many of whom already had started to seek out the best spot on the mountain, at first failed to spot Armstrong riding with friends.

"There was a little delay," joked Armstrong. "I had a white jersey on." *AP*

Landis retakes yellow jersey

L'ALPE D'HUEZ, FRANCE—FLOYD LANDIS is wearing the race leader's yellow jersey again at the Tour de France, regaining it Tuesday in the punishing Alps where a former teammate-turned-rival made quite a name for himself.

That teammate, Lance Armstrong, who happened to be in L'Alpe d'Huez as a cheerleader, ended up witnessing the American's winning ride.

Though he admitted "a little friction here and there" with Landis in the past, none of that was apparent on this day.

"If I was a betting man, I'd certainly put my money there right now," he said.

And all he needs to do is stay that way through Sunday, with the bright maillot jaune on his back.

"I would like to keep it," Landis said.

While not by design, Landis regained the lead by hugging the wheels of one top rival and outpacing the others he worries about most. He cemented his status as the man to beat by placing fourth in the 15th stage, the Tour's entree into the Alps, with a grueling uphill finish at the legendary mountain.

That performance pushed Landis a bit closer to victory in the first Tour after Armstrong won cycling's premier race a record seven times.

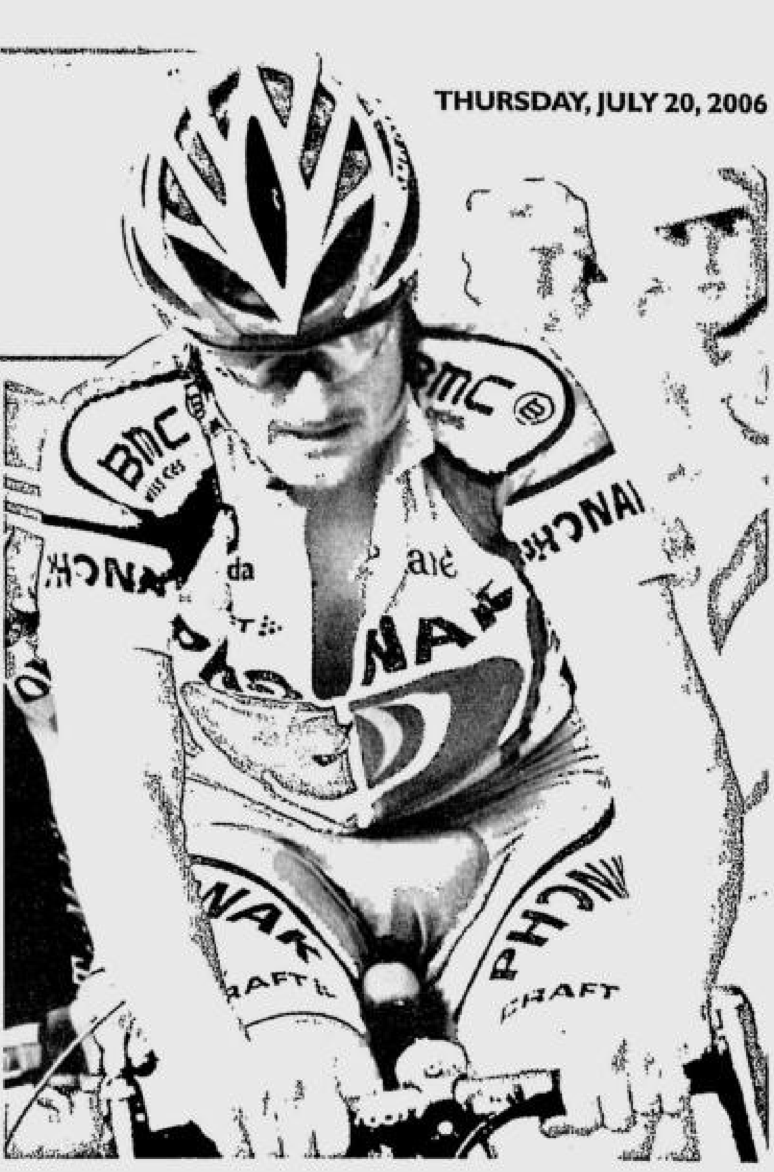
Landis, who grew up in eastern Pennsylvania's Mennonite country, plans to ride conservatively in two more tough Alpine stages, with a penultimate individual time trial stage on tap before Sunday's finish on the Champs-Elysees in Paris.

Now, potential contenders like Germany's Andreas Kloeden, Australia's Cadel Evans, Spain's Carlos Sastre and Russia's Denis Menchov will have to outpace Landis to win. And they are all within three minutes of him.

Landis said his main concern was Kloeden, a T-Mobile rider who finished second to Armstrong in the 2004 Tour. The German had lost time in the Pyrenees last week, but was the only cyclist to keep up with him in the stage.

"I'd never written him off completely and I can't do so with the other guys, either," Landis said.

The byproduct of hewing to the German's wheel was that Landis finished 1:39 ahead of Spain's Oscar Pereiro, who had seized the yellow jersey from him on Saturday, and reclaimed the race lead. *AP*



AMERICAN Floyd Landis (Phonak/Swi) rides through the 187-km fifteenth stage of the 93rd Tour de France cycling race from Gap to L'Alpe d'Huez. AFP

Mickelson ready to move on

HOYLAKE, ENGLAND—THE LEATHER-bound registry is called the "Strangers Book," an inch thick of weathered pages dating to 1980. The latest edition is in the Royal Liverpool clubhouse for guests to sign when they play the storied course.

Imagine what Ernie Els must have thought when he showed up to play 10 days after the US Open.

On the line above the first empty space, dated June 26, was the signature of Phil Mickelson from San Diego, Calif.

"They asked me to come sign the club book, and I saw Phil's name there," Els said Tuesday. "And I was like, 'What's he ... is he playing today?' And they said, 'No, he was here two days ago.'

Mickelson was so eager to leave behind his debacle at Winged Foot—a double bogey on the 72nd hole that cost him the US Open and third straight major championship—that he showed up at Hoylake that next week to start preparing for the British Open.

He spent two days at Royal Liverpool, then returned last Thursday to play what amounts to a full tournament. Asked how much they played, caddie Jim Mackay replied, "You want rounds or hours?"

PHIL Mickelson hits from a bunker during a practice round. REUTERS

It is hard to argue with the results.

In the last 10 majors, Mickelson has won three times, was runner-up twice and has finished out of the top 10 only twice. It was in 2004, the start of his stellar streak, that he began studying courses as if he were cramming for an exam.

"I feel very confident in the way I've prepared for tournaments and the way I've been playing," he said. "I don't want to let one bad hole interfere with that, which is why I immediately altered my schedule to come over here. I know that my record hasn't been what I wanted it to be at the British Open, and I wanted to have those extra days to really work hard and see if I could bring my best golf out this week." *AP*

Mohammed, Murray sign with Pistons

AUBURN HILLS, MICHIGAN—NAZR MOhammed and Flip Murray signed with the Detroit Pistons on Tuesday, adding depth to a team that has been depleted by the loss of All-Star center Ben Wallace.

The Pistons signed Mohammed to a five-year contract—with the final year being an option—that will pay the center $5.2 million next season. Murray accepted Detroit's two-year offer worth $3.5 million.

Mohammed started in 30 of 80 games last season for the San Antonio Spurs, averaging 6.2 points, 5.2 rebounds and 17.4 minutes. He matched a career high with a 30-point performance, making 13-of-21 shots against the Phoenix Suns on March 17, and he grabbed a career-high 20 rebounds earlier in the season.

Murray, a shooting guard, averaged 11.2 points last year for Seattle and Cleveland.

Detroit was willing to make Wallace the highest-paid player in franchise history next season, but it chose not to increase its offer. *AP*

IN THE KNOW

The La Salle Eligibility Scandal

AUG. 2, 2005
La Salle asks the National Education Testing and Research Center of the education department to verify the authenticity of scholastic eligibility documents of its students. Two weeks later, La Salle receives the initial verification from the NETRC. It stated that the Philippine Educational Placement Test Certificate of Rating (PEPTCR) of Mark Lester Benitez was fabricated, while the documents of Timoteo Gatchalian III was subject for verification.

SEPT. 30, 2005
La Salle top officials are alerted to the problem. The university attributed the delay to "administrative procedures." By then, the UAAP finals series between the Far Eastern U Tamaraws and the Green Archers has started.

La Salle sends a letter to then UAAP president Fr. Max Rendon, acknowledging that one of its basketball players submitted a spurious certificate of his PEP Test, a government exam taken in lieu of a high school diploma. The school vows an internal probe.

OCT. 11, 2005
La Salle publicly admits that it unknowingly fielded an ineligible player in the last three years. The Green Archers offer to forfeit their 2004 men's basketball crown. Two papers, including the INQUIRER, break the story.

OCT 18, 2005
The plot thickens as the INQUIRER breaks the story of another La Salle player, Gatchalian, also submitted a fake PEPTCR document. La Salle assures the public that it will get to the bottom of the controversy.

OCT. 26, 2005
La Salle implicates liaison officer Raul Lacson and assistant team manager Manny Salgado as the team officials who helped secure the fake eligibility documents of its two players. Although earlier news reports had leaked the identity of the cagers, it was only then La Salle officially named the cagers as Benitez and Gatchalian.

NOV. 2, 2005
Team manager Terry Capistrano and head coach Franz Pumaren resign from their posts. Pumaren, however, would later reassume head coaching duties for the Green Archers.

JAN. 23, 2006
La Salle informs the league that it intends to take a leave of absence from the men's basketball tournament to rebuild its cage program.

FEB. 8, 2006
Noting that basketball is a compulsory sport, the UAAP board turns down La Salle's request.

APRIL 21, 2006
The UAAP suspends La Salle from all sports in the 2006 UAAP season, stressing that it was La Salle's responsibility to ensure that the "eligibility documents are to be authenticated and verified."

APRIL 27, 2006
Describing the UAAP decision as vague, La Salle sends a letter to UAAP president Fr. Max Rendon to seek a clarification and an explanation on the decision. The UAAP responds by saying that the decision was self-explanatory.

JULY 8, 2006
The UAAP men's basketball tournament begins.

JASMINE W. PAYO

UAAP feels pinch of La Salle's absence

By Francis Ochoa and Jasmine W. Payo

AT WHAT PRICE DOES DISCIPLINE COME?

Whether the league admits it or not the UAAP is feeling the pinch of La Salle's suspension, and most of it is coming from the cash registers.

Sponsors have backed out, venues have become smaller and live attendance is expected to shrink from last year.

According to an official from ABS-CBN, the television network that doubles as the UAAP's marketing arm, approximately half of the league's top advertisers have pulled out this season. The percentage as to how much La Salle's absence has to do with it is even greater.

"Admittedly, there are less advertisers because the landscape is different," Jojo Garcia, ABS-CBN's customer development head for sports, told the INQUIRER. "Some clients cited the absence of La Salle, but it's also more than that."

He did not elaborate on the La Salle factor, but Garcia said the game venues chosen this season —Ninoy Aquino Stadium and Rizal Coliseum —also had a hand in turning away some of the UAAP's top advertisers.

"Both the venues are smaller," noted Garcia. "For some clients, it's different compared to Araneta in terms of prestige and accessibility."

Raised eyebrows

The timing of the switch to smaller venues also raised eyebrows. Last season, the UAAP played the bulk of its games at both the Blue Eagle gym of Ateneo and the Araneta Coliseum. This year, with La Salle serving out its suspension for fielding ineligible players in its basketball team in the last three seasons, there will be less games at the Big Dome.

UAAP secretary general Bren Perez of host University of the East says the switch of venues was coincidental.

"The PSC (Philippine Sports Commission) offered us the venues, through chairman Butch Ramirez," said Perez. "They invited both the UAAP and the NCAA to make it the home of both leagues. And we considered it because they gave us discounts."

And the league needs discounts where it can take them.

Among the missing notable sponsors who usually plunk millions worth of advertising money to the league coffers are Globe, a heavy advertiser during the college basketball tournament, Nestle and Samsung.

"We lost our top three clients, but we're still negotiating with others," said Garcia. "It's a work in progress. We have to move forward."

Globe, whose president is La Salle product Gerry Ablaza, usually competes with Smart for advertising spots during the basketball tournament.

Nestle's ice cream product, meanwhile, institutionalized the cheerdance competition, a regular fare highly anticipated by college basketball followers.

Other top advertisers who have pulled out their spots are Mentos, Milo, Polo and Close-Up.

"We're currently selling the cheerdance competition," added Garcia. "Yes, it will be next month, but we're in the process of negotiation."

No figures were given as to how much both the UAAP and ABS-CBN stand to lose this season, but the price could be substantial.

Absent rivalry

Further hurting the league's profits is the absence of the blockbuster games between arch rivals Ateneo and La Salle, who meet at least twice every season. For the television carrier and for the league, every game between both squads is an automatic cash cow, not just through ticket sales.

Last year, Ford launched a new car model at halftime during the first-round match between the two glamour squads.

"We get spot buys for Ateneo-La Salle games," said Garcia. "There are also spot buys for games featuring other teams. But we can command better rates, the premium rates, for Ateneo-La Salle games."

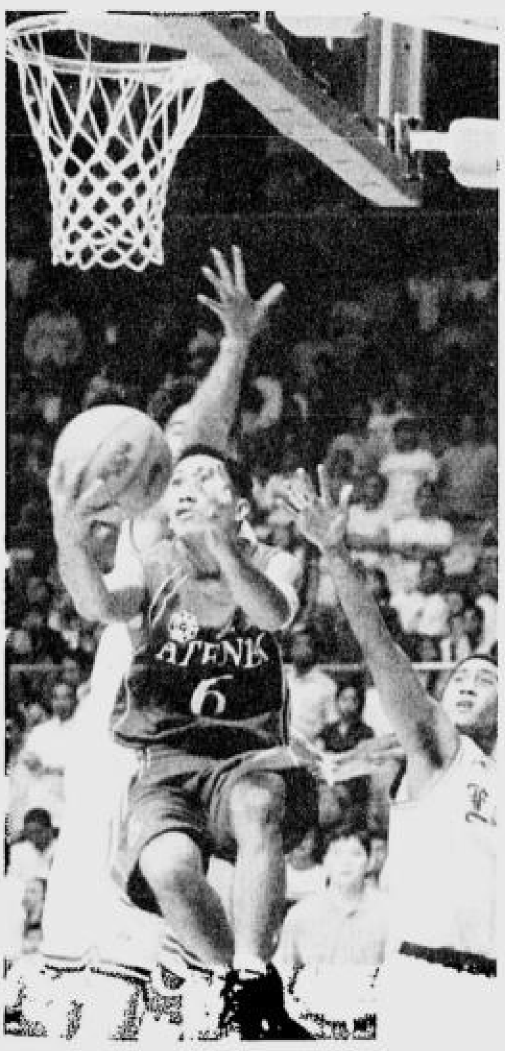
Although league observers see a decline in attendance rates with no Ateneo-La Salle rivalry to look forward to, host University of the East still noted the strong opening-day attendance, which nearly reached the 15,000 mark.

"As far as attendance and the crowd is concerned, we had no problems on opening day," said Perez.

But numbers can sometimes be deceiving, especially if only the opening day weekend is concerned. Already, the league will be playing with a depleted schedule—La Salle's absence means 14 less games.

The fact that the Archers bring a full-house crowd and that the Blue-versus-Green rivalry never fails to pack playing venues means that a fat chunk of the attendance rates just got flushed down the drain this season.

But the UAAP is willing to weather the financial storm, if only to prove there's no price too steep to pay for discipline.

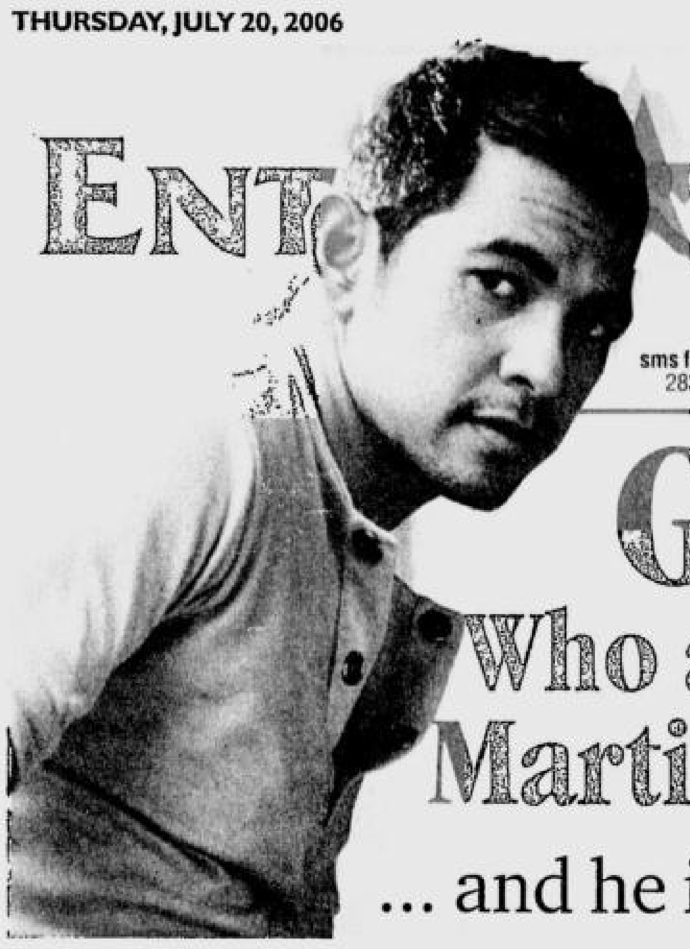


GAMES between Ateneo and La Salle always pack playing venues. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

"We have just renewed a five-year contract with ABS-CBN and there will be good years and not so good years," said UAAP board representative Anton Montinola of Far Eastern University. "They've earned from the Ateneo-La Salle games in the past and this year may not be a good one. So it will just average out."

Besides, as Perez puts it, "the league is still doing okay, we're moving on. We're doing our best as host, and so far, we're having no problems."

La Salle made the bed by fielding two ineligible players for three seasons, including during its championship year in 2004. Unfortunately, it's the league that has to find ways to sleep through the night on it.



ENT AINMENT

Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

sms feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart) **or email us at** pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

Gary V.: Who am I to judge Martin and John?

… and he isn't bolting 'ASAP'

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

IT SEEMED UNLIKELY for Gary Valenciano, Unicef goodwill ambassador and devout Christian, to get caught in controversies, but there was persistent talk that he was bolting ABS-CBN's Sunday musical-variety show "ASAP 2006," just like colleague and friend Martin Nievera.

Gary admitted he had heard the rumor, but insisted that he's very much content with the show—and network. "I'm happy with the people I work with. A lot can still be done to showcase the artists' best, but that's a challenge I'm willing to take with them. My coworkers want the same thing. It may take time, but for as long as [the network] is willing to listen, then we're okay."

So he's not leaving "ASAP"?

"I'm leaving, but not permanently," he said.

Early next year, Gary is going to Los Angeles to study music production, sound engineering and film scoring at the Music Institute of Technology. Son Gabriel is enrolling in the same school.

He's eyeing the international gospel scene, he insisted; he's not out to compete with Martin, who's now a headliner in Las Vegas.

"I want to perform there, but I don't want to make Vegas my base," Gary clarified, adding that he'd be shuttling between Manila and LA.

He had just renewed his contract with ABS-CBN, he said. "It's a very flexible [deal] that can be adjusted [depending on] what may happen abroad. Martin doesn't have the same contract [with "ASAP"],- but I felt I needed one, to protect the interests of both parties. Whenever I'm in town, I'm committed to the show."

Is Gary set to be godfather to Martin's soon-to-be-born son with longtime girlfriend Katrina Ojeda?

"I'm the *ninong* of Ram, his second son [with ex-wife Pops Fernandez]," Gary said. "When I asked Martin about Katrina's condition, he didn't deny it … It's not for me to judge my friend. I know Martin well. He has a golden heart."

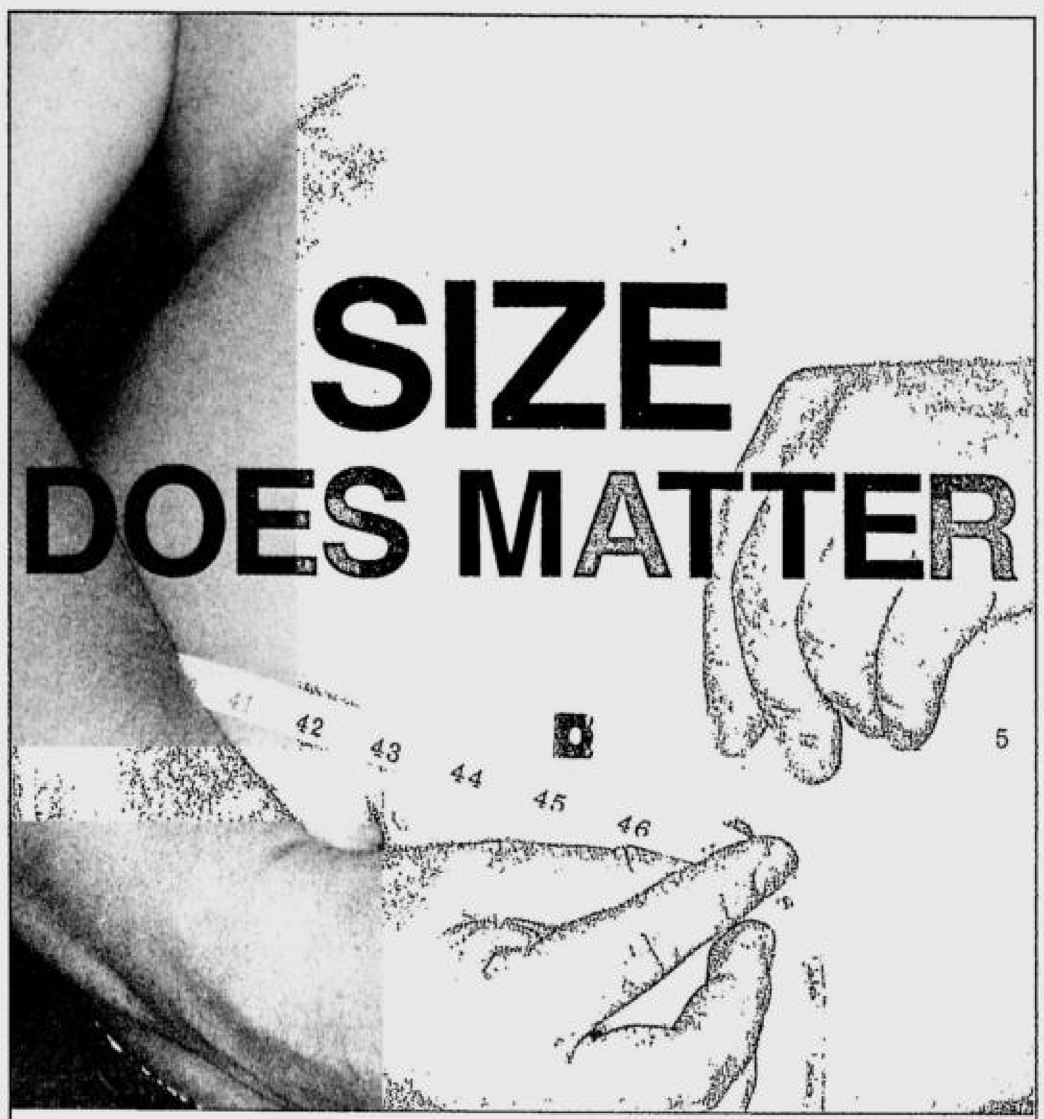
As for Katrina, Gary finds her "nice." He said he was "praying for their continued happiness."

Another incident

Gary recently found himself in the middle of another incident—when he acted as referee to John Estrada and Jericho Rosales who had a showdown over Heart Evangelista at the Imax theater in SM Mall of Asia.

He recounted: "I don't look at it [like] I was caught in the middle. I just did what I felt was the right thing to do. Everyone felt the tension. I tried to convince them that it wasn't

GARY V/ A2-3



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Jaymee Ong on James Caan: 'He's lovely, sexy'

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

KUALA LUMPUR—AS HOST of the AXN entertainment news show "e Buzz," Australian-Chinese actress-model Jaymee Ong hobnobs with the rich and famous.

Jaymee, currently based in Singapore, has had plenty of exposure in both the Hong Kong and Hollywood film communities. In HK, she was featured in the chop-socky hit "Gen-X Cops" (with Jacky Chan) and the indie film "X'mas Rave Fever" (with Mark Lui), both in 1999. It was only a matter of time before Hollywood beckoned.

In 2001, she had a cameo role in Jerry Bruckheimer's "Pearl Harbor," followed by roles in movies ("Dirty Deeds," "Cats and Mice") and TV ("Las Vegas," "Entourage").

She took over as "e Buzz" host from original emcee Joey Mead.

INQUIRER Entertainment interviewed Jaymee at the launch of AXN's "The Amazing Race Asia."

TAKE FIVE

What led you to "e Buzz"?

Before Joey Mead signed up as host, I had actually met with AXN people and had been offered the job. At first, I said no, though I really wanted the job. Fortunately, when I decided to live in Singapore, the slot was again available!

You can pass for a Filipina.

I get that a lot. I'm also mistaken for a Latina and Hawaiian. It's the pan-Asian look.

Is that an asset or liability in Hollywood?

It's kinda strange. I lived there for seven years, acting and modeling. I hired a dialect coach to acquire an American accent. But in auditions, I was often told: "You're not Asian enough."

It's a tough industry. A lot depends on timing and meeting the right people. I was just thankful for every job.

Did you encounter prejudice?

Not outright. People are more sensitive when it comes to race, but when it comes to a woman's weight, that's a different story!

What was it like shooting "Las Vegas" with James Caan?

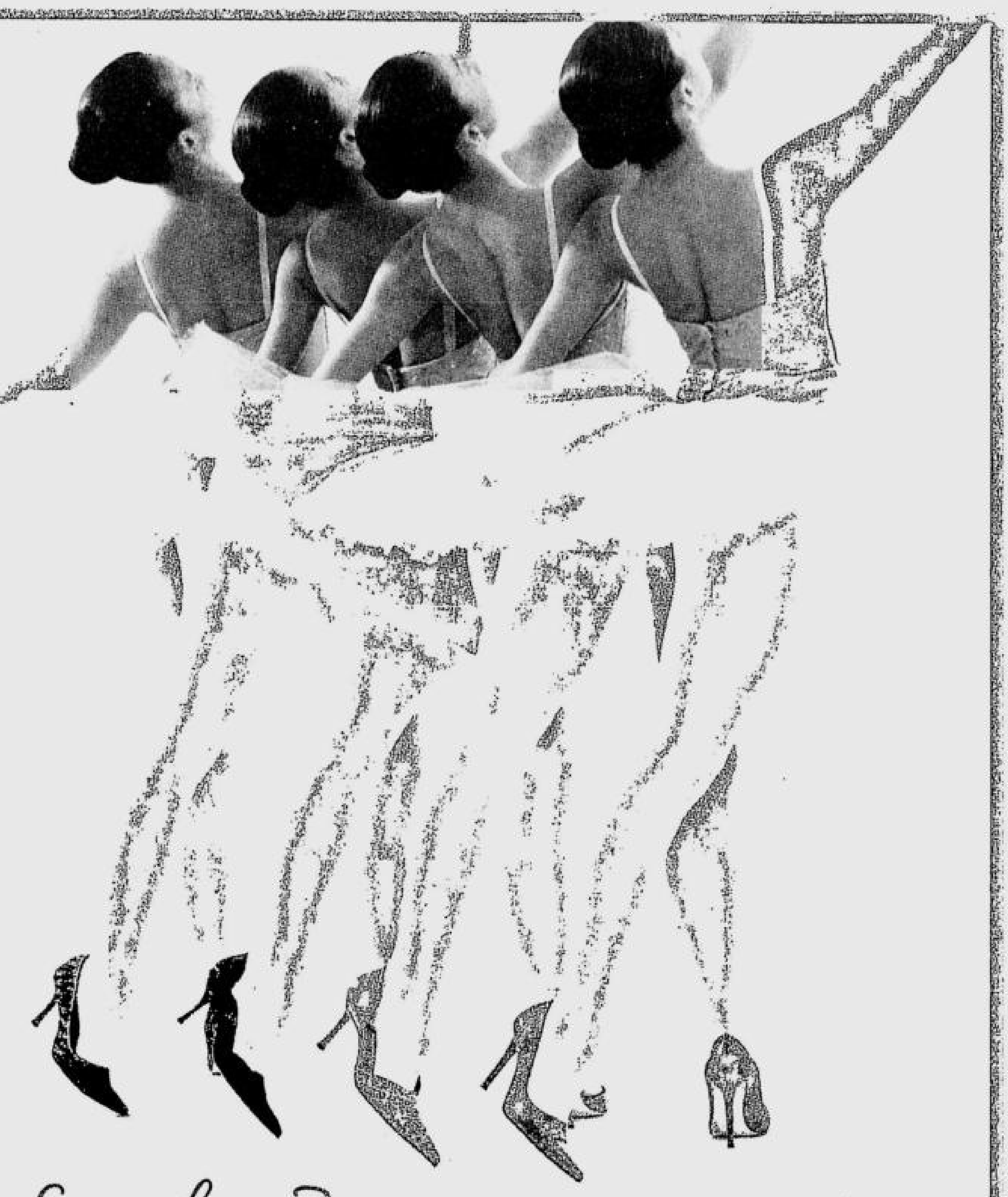
It was amazing. I played an Asian version of Paris Hilton.

James was lovely and sexy. At first, it was intimidating. I kept thinking, "He's Sonny from 'The Godfather'!" But he was warm and welcoming.

What was it like working on "Entourage"?

I went to acting classes with the

JAYMEE/ A2-3



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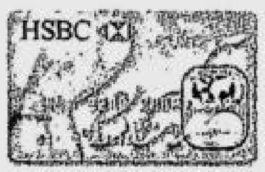

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WOW! Ogie Diaz, Tia Pusit and Fernan de Guzman

"TWILIGHT DANCERS." From left, Dennis Recto, Terrence Baylon, Tyrone Perez, Chester Nolledo and Chris Martinez.

Oh, those gorgeous young men in skimpy outfits!

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

I NEVER WATCHED THE SHOOTINGS, pictorials or tapings of my gay son **IC** in the past, since he was a child star—maybe because I was afraid my presence would cramp his style.

But just this once, I was tempted to peek at his shooting for the controversial "Twilight Dancers." (Direk **Mel Chionglo** and my idol **Ricky Lee** say they had the role of the young impersonator Hazel tailor-made for IC after they saw him in "Manay Po.") I'd be a hypocrite not to admit that the prospect of seeing gorgeous young men in skimpy outfits was enough to lure me (ha-ha-ha!).

National Artist for Film **Lino Brocka** who started it with his now classic "Macho Dancer." When he departed, ace director Mel Chionglo picked it up, doing "Sibak: Midnight Dancers." A few years later, he followed it up with "Burlesk King." These films became the toast of Toronto and other film festivals abroad.

Now, **Brillante Mendoza**'s Centerstage Productions (upon the suggestion of foreign film fest coordinator **Ferdinand Lapuz**) is doing "Twilight Dancers" for Toronto this September. Starstruck Year One Avenger **Tyron Perez** plays Dwight, star dancer of the gay bar row. Also in the cast are **Cherrie Pie Picache** as the manipulative Madame Loca, **Joel Lamangan** as the gay politician Mayor Manibog, **William Martinez** as the macho gay Bruno and **Arnel Ignacio** as the gay bar floor manager Taurus. I kept teasing William (my first BF!) that from *Pabling*, he now plays a *bading*! He has a torrid love scene with Tyron a la "Brokeback Mountain."

Direk Joel had no qualms about playing a drag queen. Among the gorgeous macho dancers are **Terence Baylon**, **Dennis Recto** and **Chester Nolledo**. Based on what I saw, "Twilight Dancers" will surely light your fire.

Flame or fame?

Jed Madela is still hung-over from his successful birthday concert at Greenbelt Onstage: "The show was the best gift. The highlight was being surprised with a special guest. I was about to sing my first movie theme song but the band played a different intro. I said, *'Uy! Mali!'* Then someone started singing—it was **Lani Misalucha**!"

Offstage, did he also have a special someone? "Funny," he said. "**Rachel Ann Go** was in the audience. **Christian Bautista** was with her (laughs). Okay *lang*. I'm a good sport."

For now, Jed's heart is in his career. The dashing balladeer is looking forward to judging the World Championships of Performing Arts in Hollywood this August. He will be inducted into their Hall of Fame. Who needs a flame when you have all the fame?

FYI (For Your Indulgence)

- **Angelika de la Cruz** and her sister **Mika** (Star Circle Kids' Quest) have different fathers. But that doesn't make Angelika's dad love Mika less. He gives her unwavering support. What a blessing to have a stepdad who's behind her every step of the way!
- **Desiree del Valle** and **Vhong Navarro** burned the phone lines while she was shooting in Bohol for CM Films' "Reunion." An eyewitness told me that, like a little girl, Desiree called Vhong up to make *sumbong* about the littlest of things. Love really makes you childish and child-like in equal parts.
- Someone who saw a pic of **Cindy Kurleto** with her boyfriend **Daniel** told me that he had a striking resemblance to Usher. Will marriage be ushered in for them soon?
- **Gretchen Barretto**, **Ruffa Guttierrez**, **Dawn Zulueta** and **Pops Fernandez** are slated to do a movie a la "Desperate Housewives." Wonder who their leading men will be? Heard that **Rustom Padilla** was originally included but since it would preempt his comeback vehicle, "Zsa Zsa Zaturnnah," he was dropped from the cast. Nope, he wasn't supposed to be one of the wives.
- **Princess Punzalan** is happily settled in the US with her hubby **Jay**. She's also back in school. Hope she comes back to show biz someday. Actresses of her caliber are an endangered species.

Terrific trio

It's been a year since my fave AM radio program, "Wow! Ang Showbiz!" (Mon-Fri 10:30 a.m.-12nn, DZXL 558), hit the airwaves. Tune in for free at www.rmn.ph. Hosted by my beloved *kapatid* **Ogie Diaz** (Ms. O) and my Iloilo "escapade mate" **Fernan de Guzman** (Ms. F), the program is No. 1 in their time slot. Now they are joined by the wacky **Tia Pusit** (Ms. P). Perk up your mornings with Hollywood news, Pinoy show biz *chikas*, etc. delivered in a way that only this terrific trio can.

Flag or flak?

When ABS-CBN's "Bandila" made its debut in the early late-night newscast, the Kapamilya Network trumpeted that the current affairs show is "an act of leadership that places flag and country ... before commercial and competitive interests."

"Bandila" was planted in the 10:30 p.m. time slot. Obviously, airing a cheaper program at an early late-night slot (where advertisers are most likely to cash in) is a good business move.

But barely a week after, "Bandila" no longer waves its banner stories at the 10:30 p.m. time slot. It has moved to 11 p.m.

Pray tell, which flag does "Bandila" really banner?

(E-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com)

ROUNDUP

CHRISTIANE Amanpour in Kenya

AIDS, the enemy

CNN's CHIEF international correspondent Christiane Amanpour travels to the slums and villages of Kenya, where more than one million children have been orphaned by AIDS. She discovers the lost generation who were infected at birth or at an early age, left to fight the pandemic on their own.

"For some children, their parents' disease is their only inheritance," says Amanpour. "It's a truly shocking story."

The documentary, "Where Have All The Parents Gone?" airs on CNN today at 5 a.m., July 22 at 2 p.m., July 23 at 2 p.m. and July 24 at 3 a.m.

Rock star wannabes

STAR WORLD invites viewers to videotape their best rendition of any rock song for the "Rock Star: Supernova Showdown!" competition.

Songs may be performed a capella or accompanied by live music or minus one cassette. Contestants must be between 18-25 years old, an amateur singer with no recording history or professional performing background and a holder of a valid passport and US visa.

Demo videos (VHS, VCD or DVD) may be sent to Stratworks, 7/F RCI Bldg., 105 Rada St., Legaspi Village, Makati City 1229 accompanied by an accomplished application form available at www.startv.com/rockstar/showdown. Deadline for submission of entries is Aug. 12.

The winner will win a trip to LA to watch the season finale of "Rock Star: Supernova" live.

'Sideways'

IN "SIDEWAYS," Jack's (Thomas Haden Church) final days as lor careens sideways as he and Miles (Paul Giamatti) hit the gas en route to mid-life crisis.

The movie airs on Star Movies July 23, 9 p.m.

SIDEWAYS

Music video

DISNEY Channel presents Nikki Gil in the Asian version of the "High School Musical" music video, singing "Breakin Free" with Malaysia's Vince Chong and Singapore's Alicia Pan.

To celebrate the release of the musical's soundtrack, fans of the show can have their album copies signed by Nikki on July 23, 4 p.m. at the Main Activity Center of the Alabang Town Center.

'The Producers'

COLUMBIA Pictures' movie musical "The Producers," a Best Picture nominee at the 2006 Golden Globe Awards, will be shown at Ayala Malls Cinema (Glorietta 4 and Greenbelt 3) starting July 26.

The movie stars Nathan Lane and Matthew Broderick in the roles they originated in the 2001 Broadway musical.

'Shall We Dance?'

RICHARD Gere and Jennifer Lopez star in "Shall We Dance?," a romantic comedy based on a runaway Japanese hit about finding passion in unexpected places.

The movie airs on Star Movies tonight and July 25, 9 p.m.

'Kubrador' could be this year's 'Maximo Oliveros'

WE SAW "KUBRADOR" ON THE OPENING night of Cinemalaya at the Cultural Center of the Philippines. We'd really like to see what British performer Julie Walters did to beat "Kubrador" lead star Gina Pareño in the Best Actress race at the recent Moscow Film Festival.

Heard this movie by Jeffrey Jeturian has been invited to five other international festivals this year. "Kubrador" could be this year's "Maximo Oliveros."

'I did'

MARTIN Nievera has admitted he will soon be a father again, because girlfriend Katrina Ojeda is pregnant. Pops has gone on record to say it hurt her. But they've both previously said they've moved on, right? Guess it's like preparing for something inevitable: When at last it's staring us in the face, it's still hard to believe it's real and ... not show biz!

MARTIN and Katrina

ACTRESS Eva Longoria of the television series "Desperate Housewives" waits for the junior middleweight rematch between Shane Mosley and Fernando Vargas at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas, Nevada July 15. REUTERS

'Pinaka...' Sarah

QTV 11's "Ang Pinaka ..." polled school kids to determine their favorite star. The winner? Among female celebs, it was Sarah Geronimo! Regine Velasquez came in second; Rachelle Ann Go, third; Kyla, fourth; and Jennylyn Mercado, fifth. Ogie Alcasid was the kids' top choice among male stars.

Winning sisters

CONGRATULATIONS to the daughters of singer Celeste Legaspi and advertising man Nonoy Gallardo, who won the top prize in the recently concluded First Philippine Graphic Fiction Awards. Clara and Waya Gallardo bagged P100,000 in cash for "Mad Sad Incredible But True Adventures of Hika Girl. Waya wrote the piece, and Clara illustrated it. The awarding ceremony was held at the Rockwell tent last week.

CLARA and Waya

RUSHES

MERYL STREEP

Yes, she was

THE VENERABLE Meryl Streep, on her latest starrer, "The Devil Wears Prada": "The film should not be considered a documentary on Anna Wintour. I met her at a benefit screening of the movie, and she was very gracious and cordial. And she *was* wearing Prada."

Let's be 'Friends'

LONDON—Jennifer Aniston wants to do a special one-off episode of the hit television comedy "Friends," the actress said in an interview broadcast Monday. She said she missed making the show and was keen to reprise her role as Rachel in a Thanksgiving special.

Aniston broke down in tears during the interview, which touched on her love life and broken marriage to Brad Pitt. Last month she told a British newspaper that she hoped to be friends again one day with her ex-husband, whom she said she would love forever. *AFP*

BRAD and Jen

DAVE Navarro and Carmen Electra were newlyweds when they posed for this snapshot at the 2003 Billboard Music Awards in Las Vegas. REUTERS

And where's Brad?

NEW ORLEANS—Brad Pitt was here Friday to promote the use of environmentally-friendly materials in the nation's largest construction project following massive devastation wrought by killer hurricanes last year. The actor is working with activist group Global Green USA. *AFP*

OPRAH and Gayle REUTERS

I'm not gay

NEW YORK—US television talk show queen Oprah Winfrey has moved to quash rumors about her relationship with her best friend, saying she is not gay. In the August issue of O, The Oprah Magazine, the TV star says some people misunderstand her close friendship of 30 years with Gayle King, an editor on the magazine often seen with Winfrey in public. *Reuters*

High-profile breakup

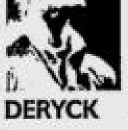
LOS ANGELES—Former "Baywatch" babe Carmen Electra and her rocker husband Dave Navarro, who once starred in MTV television show "Till Death Do Us Part: Carmen + Dave," have separated, the couple's publicist announced on Monday. "They are amicably separating," said publicist Brit Reece. This is the same Dave Navarro who teared up when MiG Ayesa sang "Baby I Love Your Way" on "Rock Star: INXS" only last year and said: "That made me realize how much I love my wife." *Reuters*

'Immortal' Cash

LOS ANGELES—In life, Johnny Cash was merely a legend. In death, he is proving immortal. Almost three years after he died at the age of 71 following a decade of poor health, the country outlaw is the most popular artist in the US, currently at No. 1 on the pop and country charts with an album of new material. *Reuters*

Avril weds

LOS ANGELES—Canadian pop star Avril Lavigne married fellow musician Deryck Whibley in California on Saturday, according to People magazine. The outdoor, nondenominational ceremony took place at a private estate in the coastal city of Montecito, 90 miles northwest of Los Angeles, with about 110 guests in attendance, the magazine said. *Reuters*


DERYCK

AVRIL

Gary V.: Who am I to judge Martin and John?

From page A2-1

the right place to discuss the matter."

He corrected the impression that he had forced John to apologize to Jericho. "I only asked John: 'Is there anything you need to apologize about?' He said none, and it seemed that he didn't want to elaborate."

He wasn't the type to judge John, either, Gary said. "Whatever happened between John and Heart, Jericho and John … that's none of my business. My only intention was to prevent something untoward. There's no telling what could've happened."

Jaymee Ong on James Caan …

From page A2-1

guy who plays Turtle (Jerry Ferrara) and on the show he tried to pick me up!

What do you miss and not miss about LA?

I don't miss the superficiality, the fact that you can't get away from work, how much money you make and what car you drive.

I don't miss traffic, but I miss my friends, the weather, driving leisurely, the food. I was a vegan for five years and it's so hard to find organic food in Singapore!

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	4 LOVEWRECKED	5 RV: RUNAWAY VACATION	6 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST	7 SUPERMAN RETURNS
GB1	1 LADY IN THE WATER	2 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST		
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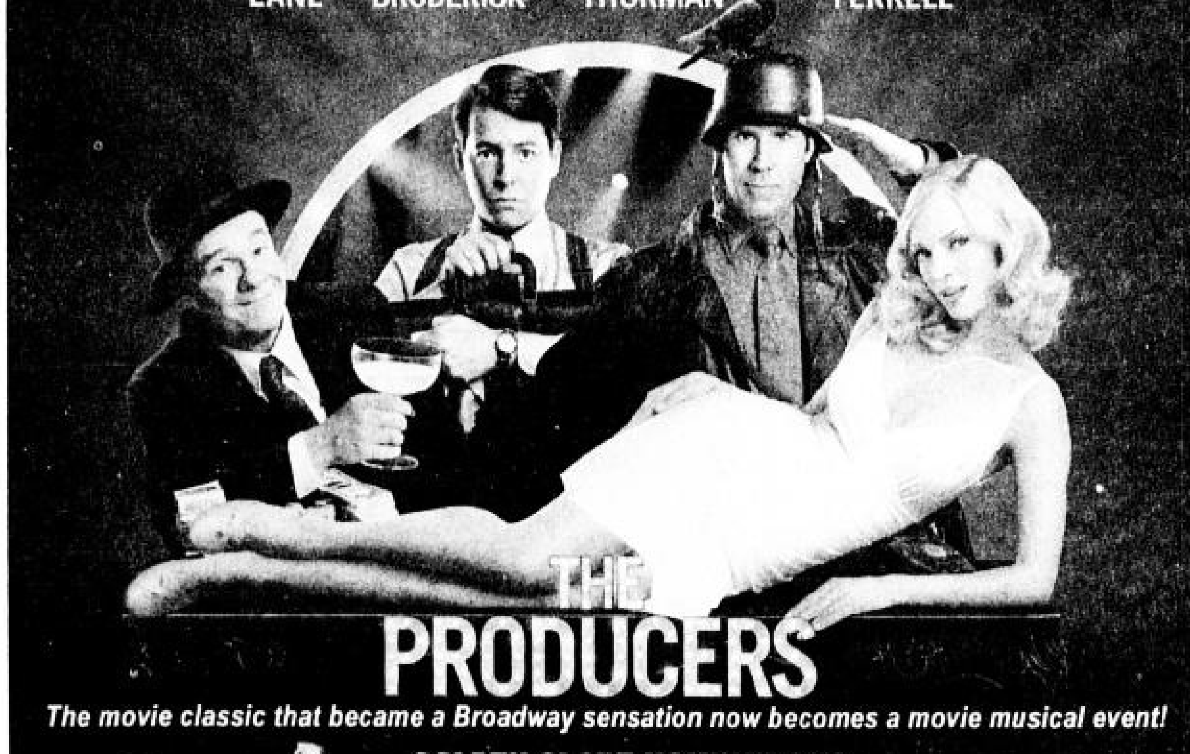

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1 NACHO LIBRE
2 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
3 LADY IN THE WATER
4 RUNAWAY VACATION

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3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2
4 RESERVED

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2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2
3 SUPERMAN RETURNS
4 R. V.

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
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2 I WANNA BE HAPPY
3 SUPERMAN RETURNS

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
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1 I WANNA BE HAPPY
2 WHITE LADY
3 CHAOS
4 SUPERMAN RETURNS

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
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2 R. V.
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Cinema 2000 Waltermart
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1 WHITE LADY
2 I WANNA BE HAPPY

Lianas Cinema
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1 BATAS MILITAR
2 SUPERMAN RETURNS

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
2 ROSARIO 18
3 BATAS MILITAR
4 SABIK SAYO

Lianas MovieCity
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5 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2

Fiesta World Mall
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1 R. V.
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
3 WHITE LADY
4 SUPERMAN RETURNS

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 I WANNA BE HAPPY
2 PEEP SHOW

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GALLERIA 632-9116
1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2 • THX
12.00 3.10 6:20 9:30
6 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50
2 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
12:30 3:40 6:50 10:00
7 LAKE HOUSE
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50
3 SUPERMAN RETURNS
12:30 3:40 6.50 10:00
8 WILD ORCHID 2
12.00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
4 LADY IN THE WATER
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00
9 NACHO LIBRE
1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00
5 WHITE LADY
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00
10 LOVE WRECKED
1:30 3:35 5:40 7:45 9:50

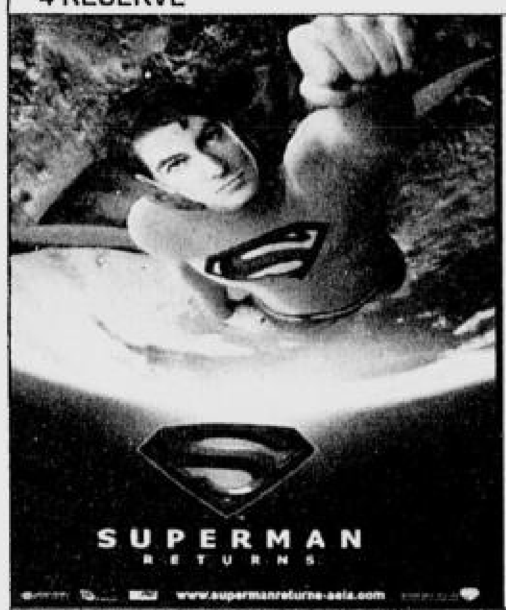
ERMITA 536-7809 to 12
1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
12:30 3:35 6:40 9:50
2 WILD ORCHID 2
12:00 2.00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00
5 SUPERMAN RETURNS
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 9:50
3 LADY IN THE WATER
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9.50
6 NACHO LIBRE
12:20 2.20 4.20 6:20 8:25 10:00
4 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
7 WHITE LADY
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10.00

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199
1 SUPERMAN RETURNS
5 LADY IN THE WATER
2 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
6 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
3 NACHO LIBRE
7 WILD ORCHID
4 WHITE LADY
8 UNITED 93

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 935-3229-30
1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
2 NACHO LIBRE
3 WHITE LADY
4 LADY IN THE WATER
5 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
6 WILD ORCHID 2

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575
1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
2 I WANNA BE HAPPY
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER 687-5378
1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
2 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
3 LADY IN THE WATER
4 WILD ORCHID 2



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3 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
4 SUPERMAN RETURNS

LIPA (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870
1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
2 WHITE LADY
3 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
4 SUPERMAN RETURNS

DASMARIÑAS (046) 852-2125 (046) 416-4332
1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
2 WHITE LADY
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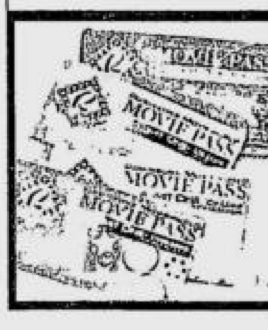
1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
4 WHITE LADY

IMUS (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188
1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
2 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
3 WHITE LADY
4 LADY IN THE WATER
5 NACHO LIBRE

STARMILLS (045) 875-1927 (045) 961-5270
1 SUPERMAN RETURNS
2 LOVE WRECKED
3 LADY IN THE WATER
4 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
5 WHITE LADY
6 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453 (034) 441-0458
1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
2 THE NUN
3 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
4 WHITE LADY
5 SUPERMAN RETURNS
6 THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS 3

ILOILO (033) 336-8070
1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
2 SEE NO EVIL
3 RV RUNAWAY VACATION
4 WHITE LADY
5 LOVE WRECKED



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'Supernova' search sizzles, confounds

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

LAST YEAR, JD FORTUNE WON the "Rock Star: INXS" singing search, and is now the fronting the band, which will perform at the Araneta Coliseum on Aug. 15. Runner-up **Mig Ayesa** will guest in the show.

The concert will be held while "Rock Star: Supernova," the tilt's second edition, is being telecast on the Star World cable channel every Wednesday and Thursday. This will give local rock fans an opportunity to compare this year's finalists to the high standard set by JD, Mig and the other 2005 rockers.

We've been watching "Rock Star: Supernova" since it started on Star World, and can share that the 2006 batch is better than last year's.

Feisty females

This could be because they've learned from the 2005 finalists' experiences, and know better how to project themselves to make the strongest impact in the tilt.

The female finalists are particularly feisty and idiosyncratic, and provide much of the color and flash this year. Thus, it was no surprise when the first finalist eliminated from the show was male (**Matt**).

Supernova is a new band put up by rock icons **Tommy Lee** from Motley Crew, **Jason Newsted** from Metallica, and **Gilby Clarke** from Guns N' Roses.

As mentors and jurors, they started out being quite supportive and kind, which charmed both finalists and viewers alike.

Last Wednesday, however, they turned up the heat in their evaluation of the contenders' performances, and the finalists realized that Tommy Lee and company meant business—and how!

Their most pathetic "victim" was faulted for not at all understanding what their jurors' music was about. She was asked: Had she even heard their songs? Piqued, she snottily hissed, "I was wearing diapers when your albums came out!"

Big mistake. That's not the politic thing to say to jurors who have the power to kick you out of the tilt before you can bleat, "I'm sorry!"

Sure as shooting, that's what the snitty singer did the following day. But, was it enough to mollify the all-powerful jurors? She ended up in the week's bottom three. (The second dropout was another male, **Chris**.)

Some of the juror's "advice" can be contradictory, so it's understandable that some of the finalists can be so stressed-out and hyper.

One day, they're remindind the contestants to "keep thinking of what Supernova is looking for." The next day, they're insisting that the finalists "get down to who you are."

Ano ba talaga kuya Tommy?

Well, since Supernova is looking for a new singer who will do justice to its kind of music, many of the finalists appear to be going for the first option. That may not be very original, but they can't be faulted for wanting to survive, right?

Any front-runners at this early stage? Dilana has been cited for her gravelly voice and fresh take on **Johnny Cash's** "Ring of Fire," so it looks like she has an edge.

Lessons learned? The choice of song to sing is of utmost importance. Meaning? "Don't do boring songs." And: Don't be so sassy that you get on the wrong side of the judges, and dig your own musical grave long before the winner is announced.

'The Contender'

Every Thursday at 8 p.m., AXN telecasts "The Contender Special: Latin Warriors," with top Hispanic fighters competing for the champion's belt.

And every Thursday at 9 p.m. beginning today, AXN screens the second season of "The Contender," with **Sugar Ray Leonard** mentoring 16 new boxers from all over America fighting for a cool million dollars.

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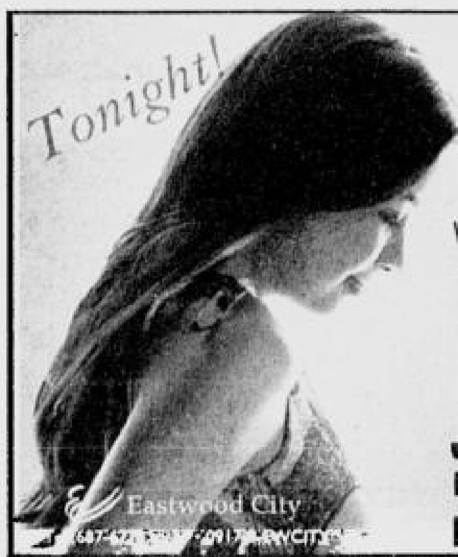

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1 NACHO LIBRE
2:15, 4:25, 6:35, 8:45, 10:50
PG-13
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN
12:30, 3:50, 7:10, 10:30
GP
3 LADY IN THE WATER
12:30, 3:10, 5:50, 8:30, 11:00
PG-13
4 RUNAWAY VACATION
1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00
GP

BANARES brothers EJ (left) and Brendon with their mentors Laly (second from left) and Teri Aldeguer

Fil-Am brothers sing, work to make Pinoy kids smile

By Marinel R. Cruz

TAKE FIVE

"DURING THE PREVIOUS SUMMERS THAT we spent here, we noted the poor state of street kids and wanted to help."

EJ Banares, half of the US-based singing duo Banares Brothers, was speaking to a group of entertainment writers about "Pusong Pinoy USA," the project he helped put together with younger brother Brendon.

When EJ, 18, and Brendon, 12, hosted a party in June to celebrate their graduation from high school and junior high, respectively, they asked their guests to donate money instead of presents—for Pusong Pinoy.

"We raised over $2,000," said Brendon. "We used the money to buy food pills, wheelchairs, hearing aids and other stuff."

Last month, they visited a poor community in Parañaque, where they sang for the children and gave away food, toys, body braces and prosthetic legs.

"They had written to us to say they needed help," said EJ: "Before we went there, we first verified whether they were really in need of assistance. We also plan to give away goods at the mall shows that we'll be doing here."

The Banares Brothers are protégés of Terri Aldeguer of the dancing duo Aldeguer Sisters. They will perform in a series of mall shows starting tomorrow at the Robinson's Place on Pioneer Street, Mandaluyong City. Guest performers are Marissa Sanchez and the Aldeguer Sisters.

Are you working with the Department of Social Welfare and Development?

EJ: No. This is just one project, but we plan to keeping it going. Hopefully, this is will involve not just my brother and myself. Other groups may want to help. That's why we're setting up a website where *you* can see the pictures of people we've helped, read some of the letters we've received, and find how you can help. You can write to us, or find some other way to contact us:

What do you get out of working on Pusong Pinoy?

EJ: I see in the faces of the people we've helped that the burden they are carrying seem to lighten. That's what's important to me.

Brendon: I remember a girl we met at the Parañaque rally. She's 19 years old. She needed prosthetic legs. One of her legs was deformed and the other had been amputated. The health workers were having a hard time putting on one of her prosthetic legs. Her dad said, "*Anak*, straighten your leg." She did. And she started crying tears of joy.

How did you get to join the (Aldeguer Sisters Performing Arts Center) ASPAC?

B: We just signed up. Our mom is often in their dance studio. When we saw them, we both said, "Wow! The Aldeguer Sisters!"

Do you plan to record an album here or have you already sent demos to international recording companies?

EJ: We're really looking for a recording deal here. This is where we feel most comfortable. We love the Philippines. We come here often. We're actually thinking of moving here, but after I finish college.

Can you speak Filipino?

B: We understand it. We know a lot of Filipino words, but we still cannot speak the language fluently. We hope to learn.

Will you always be a tandem or would you also consider separate careers?

B: It depends on how our things turn out. We're still enjoying being called The Banares Brothers. If we eventually feel that separating will be best for both our careers, then maybe we'll do that. Right now, a lot of people who come up to us after watching our concerts say we sound good together.

Which would you really like to pursue—acting, dancing our singing?

EJ: I want to do all.

There are only two of you in the family. Don't you wish you have a sister?

B: Yeah. It's a sad story.

EJ: We had a little sister once. She was born in October. I think this was in 1994. She died of the Sudden Infant Death (SID) syndrome.

(The Banares Brothers will be at Robinson's Place Novaliches on July 22, SM Bicutan, July 28, Ever Gotesco Manila, July 29, Ever Commonwealth, July 30, SM Bacoor, Aug. 4, SM Fairview, Aug. 11, Robinson's MetroEast, Aug. 12, SM Sucat, Aug. 19 and SM Valenzuela, Aug. 26)

> This is just one project, but we plan to keep it going

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1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
MTRCB GP
12 30, 3.40, 6.50 10 00

2 LADY IN THE WATER
MTRCB PG-13
2.00, 4:40, 7 20, 10:00

3 R.V. RUNAWAY VACATION
MTRCB. GP
12 40 3 00 5 20 7 40, 10.00

4 NACHO LIBRE
MTRCB PG-13
1 20, 3 30, 5.40, 7:50, 10:00

PREMIERE THEATRE
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
2 10, 5 20, 8 30 MTRCB GP

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LADY IN THE WATER PG13 1:10,3:30,5:50,8:10,10:30	NACHO LIBRE PG13 1:20,3:30,5:40,7:50,10:00	RUNAWAY VACATION G 1:25,3:30,5:35,7:40,9:50
PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2 G 12:40,3:50,7:00,10:10	SUPERMAN RETURNS G 12:30,3:40,6:50,10:00	PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2 G 1:50,5:00,8:10

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NACHO LIBRE
1:05 / 3:15 / 5:25 / 7.35 / 9:45
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
1:00 / 4:00 / 7:00 / 10.00
LADY IN THE WATER
12:20 / 2:10 / 2:45 / 4:35
5:10 / 7:00 / 7:35 / 9:25 / 10:00
RUNAWAY VACATION
1:10 / 3:20 / 5.30 / 7:40 / 9:50
PLATINUM CINEMAS
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
12:00 / 3:00 / 6.00 / 9:00

ALIMALL 5
RUNAWAY VACATION
12:05 / 2:15 / 4:20 / 6.35 / 8:45
LADY IN THE WATER
1:15 / 3:40 / 6:05 / 8.30
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
12:00 / 3:00 / 6:00 / 9:00
WHITE LADY
12:10 R4 / 1:30 / 3:50 / 6:10 / 8:30
NACHO LIBRE
12:00 / 2:10 / 4:20 / 6:30 / 8:40
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CINEMA 2
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PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
LADY IN THE WATER
SUPERMAN RETURNS
NACHO LIBRE
LOVEWRECKED
RV
WHITE LADY
I WANNA BE HAPPY

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
NACHO LIBRE
I WANNA BE HAPPY
LOVEWRECKED
PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
WHITE LADY
THE NUN
LADY IN THE WATER
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SUPERMAN RETURNS
SCARY MOVIE 4
BATAS MILITAR
RV

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LOVEWRECKED
THE NUN

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LOVEWRECKED
THE NUN
I WANNA BE HAPPY
SCARY MOVIE 4
LAKE HOUSE

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WHITE LADY

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LADY IN THE WATER
WHITE LADY
RV

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NACHO LIBRE
PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM CITY DASMARINAS
NACHO LIBRE
WHITE LADY
RV
PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM CITY SUCAT
RV
WHITE LADY
PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
LADY IN THE WATER

LUZON

SM CITY BAGUIO
WHITE LADY
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LADY IN THE WATER
PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM CITY MARILAO
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RV
WHITE LADY
NACHO LIBRE

SM CITY BACOOR
THE NUN
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PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
LADY IN THE WATER
SUPERMAN RETURNS
WHITE LADY
NACHO LIBRE
RV

SM CITY BATANGAS
PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
WHITE LADY
SUPERMAN RETURNS
RV

SM CITY LUCENA
SUPERMAN RETURNS
PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
NACHO LIBRE
WHITE LADY

SM CITY CLARK
PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
RV
LADY IN THE WATER
I WANNA BE HAPPY
WHITE LADY
SUPERMAN RETURNS

SM CITY PAMPANGA
PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
SUPERMAN RETURNS
LADY IN THE WATER
RV
I WANNA BE HAPPY
WHITE LADY

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PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
NACHO LIBRE
SUPERMAN RETURNS

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WHITE LADY
RV
SUPERMAN RETURNS
PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU
PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
LADY IN THE WATER
RV
NACHO LIBRE
PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
THE NUN
WHITE LADY
SUPERMAN RETURNS

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PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
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LOVEWRECKED
RESERVED
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CHAOS
WHITE LADY
LADY IN THE WATER
RV
SUPERMAN RETURN

SM CITY CAGAYAN
PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
WHITE LADY
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One of 13 'Rock Star' finalists goes home today

HERE ARE THE LAST FIVE OF THE 13 REmaining "Rock Star: Supernova" finalists left standing this week. Today, one of these 13 driven and talented singers—all front-man material—will be sent home by judges Tommy Lee, Gilby Clarke and Jason Nested.

PATRICE PIKE, musician

Hometown: Austin, Texas

Billboard mag proclaimed her "one of the finest up-and-coming contemporary rock singers in America." Small wonder. Patrice has been a professional musician since age 16. She co-created numerous records and musical groups—including Sister Seven and Patrice Pike and Blackbox Rebellion—and toured the United States and Western Europe. She wrote and performed the Top 10 Billboard hit, "Know What You Mean" and won the grand prize in the 2004 Overall USA Songwriting Competition. She has opened for Dave Matthews Band, Sarah MacLachlan, Natalie Merchant and Sinead O'Connor.

RYAN STAR, singer

Hometown: New York

Ryan grew up with his parents' huge record collection and his brother's old guitar, learning songs by ear. At age 14, Ryan became the lead singer of Stage, a band formed with high school buddies, which played at legendary NY clubs CBGB's and Mercury Lounge. After building up enough buzz, Stage signed up with Madonna's Maverick Records and toured the country a few times. Now Ryan has decided it's time to take a different direction—on his own.

STORM LARGE, singer

Hometown: Portland, Oregon

Storm has been able to sing, pick out harmonies and make up lyrics since she was 5. From 1989, Storm sang her way through The American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York City. By 1991, she had moved to San Francisco and started her first band, Flower SF. Then came Dirty Mouth, which was good for songwriting but didn't quite rock like she wanted. After that came Storm Inc., a heavier pop band with more ambition and touring legs, but it imploded in 2001. Storm landed in Portland, where she found The Balls, which has since wracked up more touring than all of her previous bands combined, and made her something of a local legend.

TOBY RAND, singer/surfer/snowboarder/carpet shop keeper

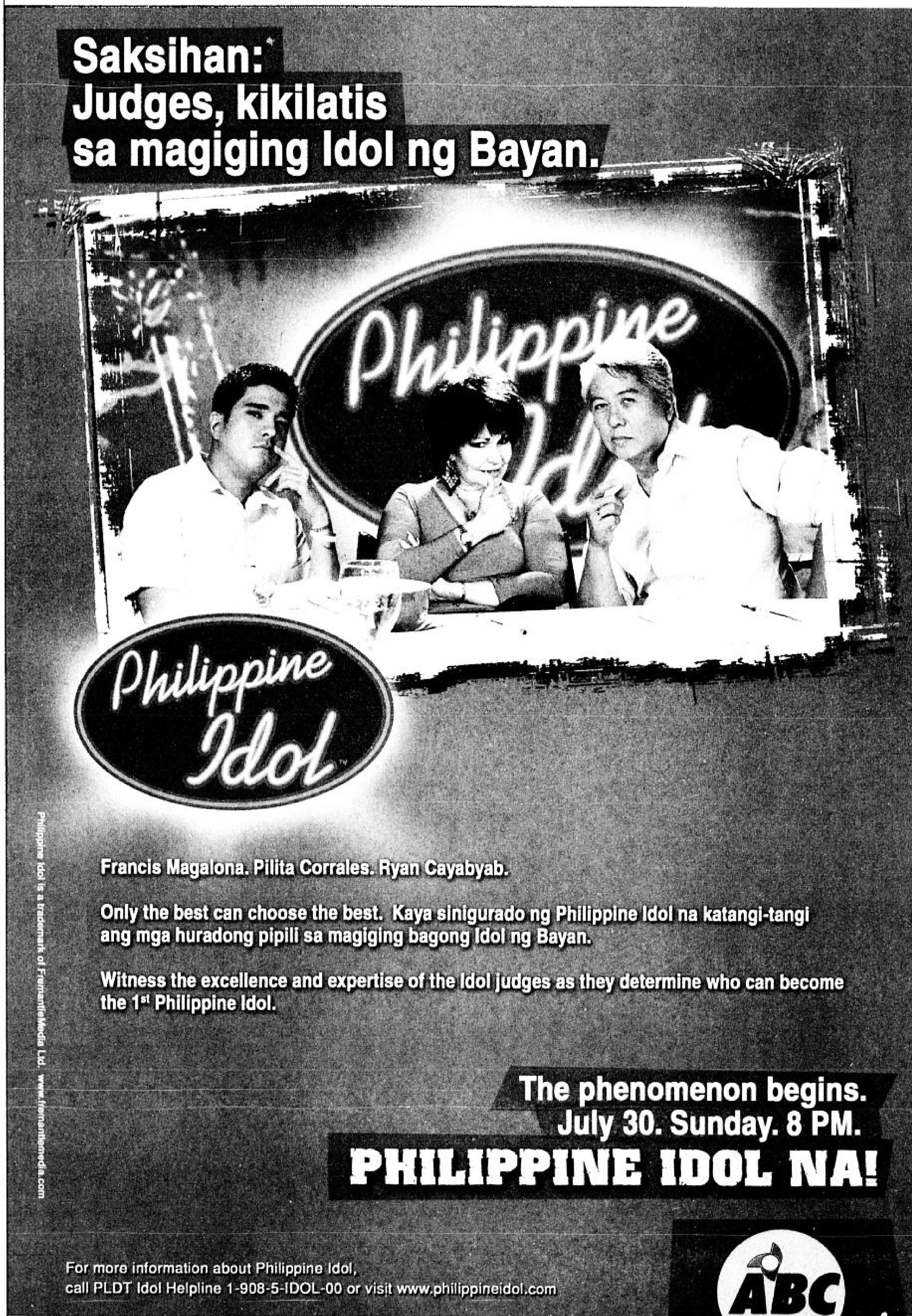
Hometown: Melbourne, Australia

The youngest of three children, Toby has been fed a strict diet of rock n' roll by his older brothers since he was born. University wasn't his thing, so Toby pursued singing and played around Melbourne. He became the lead singer for Juke Kartel and has written music which appeared on numerous surf videos and promotional CDs. They have opened for the Taste of Chaos Tour and Nickelback. He's currently playing in an acoustic trio.

ZAYRA ALVAREZ RULETA, singer/songwriter

Hometown: Richardson, Texas

Born in Puerto Rico, Zayra started playing in a few bands at age 14, although that petered out somewhat for lack of direction. Earning a college degree then placed her musical ambitions on hold, but her passion was reawakened in Dallas, Texas where her guitar playing, writing and singing received serious attention. Zayra began performing in both English and Spanish. After two years, she recorded her first album "Breaking Up Grey Skies," an acoustic EP which she describes as very raw and pure. She then embraced her Latin roots and recorded her defining album "Ruleta"—featuring 11 songs showcasing her voice and songwriting abilities. Zayra has since toured the West Coast and her native Puerto Rico.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Ombudsman to probe Masinloc mess

LYN RILLON

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo tries out a Honda motorbike at the inauguration of Honda Philippines' plant in Tanauan City, Batangas.

Finds enough basis in Bayan suit vs PSALM directors, execs

By Abigail L. Ho and Michael Lim Ubac

THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN HAS FOUND "ENOUGH BASIS" to investigate graft charges filed by militant group Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) against board members of Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp.

In a two-page order issued on July 12, the Ombudsman said the respondents should file their counter-affidavits and other controverting evidence within 10 days of their receipt of the order.

They should also submit proofs of service of their counter-affidavits within the 10-day period.

"Failure to file their counter-affidavits or evidence, with proof of service thereof to the complainant, within the aforesaid period shall be deemed a waiver and the proceeding shall continue according to existing rules," the order said.

Respondents in the complaint included Cabinet members who also sat on the PSALM board, among them Finance Secretary Margarito Teves, Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla, Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya, Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez and Trade Secretary Peter Favila.

PSALM president Nieves Osorio and PSALM vice president for asset management and electricity trading Froilan Tampinco were

OMBUDSMAN/ B2

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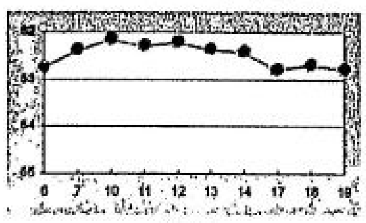

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As of 5 p.m., July 19, 2006

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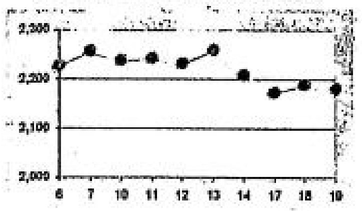
per ounce Hong Kong, July 19, 2006



(See stock market report on Page B4)

STOCK MARKET

Stocks end lower

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.47-percent lower yesterday as high oil prices scared off investors with the prospect of lower corporate profits and slower economic growth, dealers said.

Although oil was easier overnight, it picked up again in Asian trade as Israel launched new attacks into Lebanon amid concerns over a possible widening of the Middle East conflict, they said.

STOCKS/ B4

SHRINKING BUDGET DEFICIT

UBS bullish on RP

By Michelle V. Remo

INVESTMENT BANK UBS HAS EXPRESSED confidence that the Philippines would sustain its improving fiscal condition as it projected substantial gains in the area of enhancing revenue collection.

"UBS' view remains unchanged that 2006 is still a fiscal stabilization year (and) beating the target deficit appears increasingly credible," the investment bank said in its latest assessment of the Philippine economy.

The investment bank added that the government could have already seen the worst in terms of tax collection shortfalls and that rising tax revenues were seen in the coming months.

The confidence it has on the government's ability to post a lower-than-programmed budget deficit this year was anchored on the monthly budget surpluses recorded in the three consecutive months to June and the marked improvement in tax collection.

The national government posted a budget surplus of P12.7 billion in June, bringing the

UBS/ B4

IN THIS ISSUE

Peza OKs 18 projects worth P1.8B /B2

Gov't paid P391.7B worth of debts in H1 /B8

Aussie firm raises $18.7M for mine project

By Christine A. Gaylican

AUSTRALASIAN PHILIPPINES MINING INC. has raised $18.7 million to finance the pre-development and start the construction of its mining facility in Nueva Vizcaya beginning in September.

The subsidiary of Australia's Climax Mining Ltd. said in a report to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Mines

AUSSIE/ B4

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Peza okays 18 projects

Total commitments rise to ₱27.7B

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE PHILIPPINE ECONOMIC ZONE Authority yesterday reported that it approved last week 18 new projects worth P1.8 billion with expected average export sales of $60 million a year.

Peza Director General Lilia de Lima said the projects were expected to create 1,969 new jobs.

De Lima said that seven of the new projects—worth some P427.8 million—were engaged in the information technology sector.

She added that year-to-date investment commitments reached a total of P27.7 billion or 18 percent higher against the comparative period of 2005.

Of the total amount, locator investments accounted for P22.6 billion while ecozone developers represented P5.1 billion.

There were 251 projects approved between Jan. 1 and July 11.

"Expected annual average direct employment to be generated by these investments is 47,741 or 35 percent higher than last year's (level)," De Lima said.

As of July 11, IT investments approved for Peza registration amounted to P4.9 billion or 36.5-percent higher than the level committed in the same period last year.

Given the go-ahead were 60 IT projects that accounted for a projected average direct employment creation of 23,241, which is 62.7 percent higher than the number for the comparative period in 2005.

Last week, Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila reaffirmed his optimism that investments would pick up due to "renewed investor confidence" although total investments approved by his department in the first half went down by 20 percent to P100 billion.

Documents from the Department of Trade and Industry showed that the Board of Investments and the Peza registered projects accounting for a combined P100.25 billion between January and June.

Of the amount, barely 44 percent or P43.8 billion represented foreign direct investments in the sectors of infrastructure, manufacturing, real estate, and information and communication technology.

Growth industries such as mining, logistics, health and wellness, tourism, and IT-enabled services were being harnessed through public-private partnerships and are providing new opportunities for investors, Favila said.

Ombudsman to probe . . .

From page B1

also named respondents.

In filing the graft charges, Bayan claimed that the PSALM board had given YNN Pacific Consortium Inc., the winning bidder for the 600-megawatt Masinloc coal-fired power plant, some undue concessions that were disadvantageous to the government.

Chief of these was the extension of the deadline for YNN to deliver the $227-million upfront payment for the generation asset, representing 40 percent of its $561.7-million bid.

Non-remittance of the upfront payment by the designated time, or by Dec. 2, 2005, should have resulted in the forfeiture of YNN's $11-million performance bond for the plant.

"When YNN failed to make the scheduled payments, PSALM officials were duty-bound to have drawn upon the performance bond in favor of the government," Bayan said. "We hold these officials criminally and administratively accountable for their glaring omission. PSALM officials do not have the authority to waive the government's rights."

Instead of forfeiting YNN's performance bond in favor of the government, however, the group said PSALM even extended the down payment remittance deadline to March 31, and then again to June 30.

In Congress, lawmakers yesterday sought to convene the Congressional Power Commission to promptly sort out the mess Masinloc privatization deal.

In separate resolutions, party-list Reps. Tedoro Casiño, Crispin Beltran and Etta Rosales claimed that the bungled privatization deal for the Masinloc, Zambales, coal-fired powered plant involving YNN Pacific and Malaysian partner Ranhill Power Berhad had underpinnings on the government's unsuccessful privatization policy.

"The privatization thrust being pursued by the government appeared to have opened new grounds for corruption, as shown by controversies hounding the deal with YNN-Ranhill and the alleged negotiations for a power supply contract with Meralco which is being questioned as highly irregular," said Rosales.

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BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

THERE GOES OUR CHANCE, AS SSS MEMbers, to turn our P20-billion investment in EPCIB into cash, which our pension fund can in turn give out to us as benefits.

It seems that the SM group's heir apparent Tessie Sy changed her mind—again.

In secret negotiations just recently, Tessie Sy and GSIS head Winston Garcia agreed on a price for the GSIS shares in EPCIB at P92 each.

That, at least to many in the banking business, still seemed cheap for the SM group, considering that Garcia had been fighting Tessie Sy over her plan to take over EPCIB at the expense of the GSIS and the SSS.

Now, under the "tender offer" rule for listed companies like EPCIB, if Tessie Sy bought out GSIS at P92 a share, she would have to offer the same price to all the other stockholders of the bank, including the SSS.

But word goes around that Tessie Sy already cut her offer to GSIS to P80.

At that price, it's a NO GO for both the GSIS and the SSS. Their charters do not allow the sale of assets at a loss. Most likely then, the deal between Tessie Sy and Garcia is off.

It's not the first time that Tessie Sy, who was among the top picks of Fortune magazine's powerful women in the world, changed her mind. Last year, through Banco de Oro president Nestor Tan, the SM group offered to buy out the GSIS at P95 a share, payable in a year. A few days later she changed her mind. Instead of buying, she was selling at that same price of P95.

Garcia naturally asked for a similar leeway of one year to pay. Tessie Sy supposedly brought it down to six months, which only after a couple days again went down to three months, until it finally went down—to Garcia's annoyance--to only one month. The deal was off.

This simply tells us that Tessie Sy is neither selling out of EPCIB nor buying out any of the other stockholders of the bank.

She simply wants the SM group to take over EPCIB without spending more cash, after the group bought out the Go family for at least P10 billion.

To acquire EPCIB in a buyout, considering the "tender offer" rule, Tessie Sy would need another P40 billion. CASH, and not just pieces of paper!

And so word goes around banking about how Tessie Sy sought the advice of a brilliant banker who was said to have a lot of experience in bank acquisition. How do you take over a bank, she wanted to know.

Simple, she was told, you just have to pay up.

***

In various press reports, Meralco claimed that a "supply contract" between Meralco and YNN for the Masinloc power plant would be good for consumers. Hmm.

But such a claim is hard to see in the past dealings of Meralco with other companies of a certain Sunny Sun, who is the visible main man in YNN, although it is possible that he is fronting for somebody else.

As winner in the government bidding for the Masinloc power plant, YNN is working on a "supply contract" with Meralco as a condition for the sale of its interest in the Masinloc to the Malaysian firm Ranhill Berhad.

YNN offered an amazing amount of $560 million for Masinloc, as against the floor price set by the government at $390 million. Sunny Sun should know that the YNN bid was too high. It is said that when he was peddling the Masinloc contract to other power groups, he claimed that he could re-negotiate a lower price later, when the dust from this Masinloc riot would have settled down. Or he could also get a high rate in a "supply contract" with Meralco. YNN could use both as come-ons to buyers of the Masinloc contract.

All of a sudden, YNN was having secret talks with Meralco on the supply contract that, based on the rate in the spot market, would cost Meralco P4.90 a kwh.

Of course we remember that Energy Secretary Lotilla revealed that the government actually offered P3.60 a kwh to Meralco for the same Masinloc power plant. Lotilla also disclosed that Meralco never responded to the offer.

Why is Meralco—and secretly, at that—even entertaining Sunny Sun and his YNN on such a highway robbery of a supply contract? Meralco's top honchos, according to insiders, are even trying to justify the deal. Hmm.

It so happens that the same Sunny Sun was also involved in a company called Duracom, which had a similar "supply contract" with none other than Meralco.

For a long time, Duracom was selling power to Meralco at P7.50 a kwh, and Meralco explained that it needed the Duracom power barges, somehow, to prevent power fluctuation, something that makes our bulb lights flicker or our appliances conk out.

Our sources say that, in such a case, Meralco would need 15 percent of the Duracom capacity at the most. Yet Meralco bought at least 40 percent of Duracom's capacity every year. Thus, Meralco sold to its customers the expensive power from Duracom much more than it did from all the five other Napocor oil-fired power plants, which had five times the capacity of Duracom.

What's more, some banks with loans to Duracom were wondering about a mysterious entry in its books, simply called "marketing fees," amounting to P250 million a year. It was paid out to YNN Holdings. Oops—that's the company of Sunny Sun.

Look at that—marketing fees. What for? The banks were told that without the "marketing fees" the Duracom power barges would not be dispatched. So there you are. In other words, it was something under the table.

To think, Duracom's "supply contract" with Meralco should have expired last February, but during the Christmas break, when things usually slowed down in the business world, Meralco sneaked in a little extension of another year.

If it happened in Duracom, can it not happen in Masinloc? Unfortunately for us, the Masinloc plant has a much bigger capacity. It's about five times that of Duracom.

***

Dr. Rick Warren, a consultant to CEOs and celebrities who wrote the book The Purpose-Driven Life and one of Newsweek magazine's "15 People Who Make American Great," will launch the P.E.A.C.E. Plan at the Ultra on July 25 and 26. It's a lay movement for five global challenges, namely, spiritual emptiness, corrupt leadership, extreme poverty, pandemic diseases, illiteracy and poor education. Sound familiar?

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You will benefit tremendously from this encounter with Dr. Rick Warren as his message will allow you to act. He will challenge us to reach further in life and make a difference in this world. His insight will bring new revelation and opportunity to us for the future. Even our relationships will be empowered. There is a cost to growing but it will cost more not to grow! You will definitely leave the Forum changed, and with a new zeal in your soul; ready to impact your world. You have been blessed to be a blessing to others.

Dr. Warren's wife, MS. KAY WARREN, Author, Teacher, and Co-founder of Saddleback Church and Acts of Mercy, will speak before MAP on 24 July 2006, Monday, 12:00 Noon, Grand Ballroom, Hotel Inter-Continental Manila. Her topic will be "HOW TO BE JOYFUL NO MATTER WHAT"

The July 24-25 events are
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Seats are limited, please call 751-1149 to 52 for reservations.

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August 5 (Saturday), September 1 (Friday), October 14 (Saturday) and November 3 (Friday)

MCLE Credit Hours	Subject
Three (3) Units 8:00 to 11:00 AM	A Survey of Supreme Court Decisions on Commercial Law in 2005 (Updates on Jurisprudence) -- Rafael A. Morales
Three (3) Units 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM	Back to Basics in Ethics (Legal Ethics) -- Mia G. Gentugaya
Three (3) Units 3:00 to 6:00 PM	A Legal Perspective – Opportunities, Challenges and Risks for Foreign Investors in the Philippine Mining Industry (MCLE-prescribed subject: Land and Economics) -- Marilyn A. Victorio-Aquino

August 12 (Saturday), September 8 (Friday), October 7 (Saturday) and November 10 (Friday)

MCLE Credit Hours	Subject
Three (3) Units 8:00 to 11:00 AM	Update on Labor Law: Recent Jurisprudence, Laws, Rules and Regulations (Updates on Laws & Jurisprudence) -- Dante T. Pamintuan
Three (3) Units 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM	Rules and Cases on Bar Discipline (Legal Ethics) -- Ramon G. Songco
Three (3) Units 3:00 to 6:00 PM	Foreign Investments in the Philippines (MCLE-prescribed subject: Transnational Business Transactions) -- Rocky L. Reyes

August 19 (Saturday), September 15 (Friday), October 28 (Saturday) and November 17 (Friday)

MCLE Credit Hours	Subject
Four (4) Units 8:00 to 12:00 AM	Pleading Writing and Oral Advocacy -- Carlos Roberto Z. Lopez
Three (3) Units 1:00 to 4:00 PM (Civil) 3:00 to 6:00 PM (Tax)	A Survey of Supreme Court Decisions on Civil Law (August and October) -- Philbert E. Varona Update on Taxation: Recent Jurisprudence, Laws, Rules and Regulations (September and November) -- Carina C. Laforteza
Two (2) Units 4:00 to 6:00 PM (A) 1:00 AM to 3:00 PM (B)	Problem Areas and Issues Affecting Philippine Construction Arbitration (Alternative Dispute Resolution) -- Emmanuel M. Lombos [A -- August and October; B -- September and November]

August 26 (Saturday), September 22 (Friday), October 21 (Saturday) and November 24 (Friday)

MCLE Credit Hours	Subject
Four (4) Units 8:00 to 12:00 AM	Trial and Pre-Trial Skills in Civil and Maritime Cases (Trial and Pre-Trial Skills) -- Anthony W. Dee & Domingo G. Castillo
Two (2) Units 1:00 to 3:00 PM	Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (International Law) -- Vicente B. Amador
Three (3) Units 3:00 to 6:00 PM	Alternative Dispute Resolution in the Philippines -- Ricardo Ma. P.G. Ongkiko

(1) (a) Attendance at more than 2 days of sessions or the full course of 4 days: P10,000
(b) Attendance at no more than 2 days of sessions: P6,000
(c) Attendance at no more than 1 day of sessions: P3,000
(d) Attendance at any lecture will be considered attendance for a full day session for purposes of the registration fee
(e) Registrants for the full course have the option to pre-select their attendance days within August to November
(f) For the full course, (i) a 10% discount will be given to early registrants (those who register and pay on or before July 21 (for the August seminar, or a combination of seminar dates starting in August), August 18 (for September, or a combination of seminar dates starting in September), September 22 (for October, or a combination of seminar dates starting in October) and October 20 (for November, or a combination of seminar dates starting in November), clients of the Firm, SyCip alumni, and government employees, and (ii) a 15% discount for a group of 10 or more participants who shall register and pay simultaneously. In case more than one type of discount is applicable, only one type of discount can be availed of.
(2) The Registration Fee includes morning and afternoon snacks, lunch, lecture materials, and the MCLE Certificate of Attendance.
(3) Payment should be in cash or check payable to SyCip Salazar Hernandez & Gatmaitan. Except for the early registrants, all check payments must be delivered at least 5 working days prior to the date of the first lecture to the SyCip Salazar Hernandez & Gatmaitan Office, 4th Floor 105 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City.
(4) We reserve the right to reschedule any or all of the lectures if warranted by reasons beyond our control.

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For more information, please call Ms. Joyce L. Rozul at 817-98-11 to 20 or send your inquiries by fax to 817-38-96, or mcle@syciplaw.com.

Local investors swamp ₱2-B NDC bond float

Proceeds to finance agricultural projects

By Michelle V. Remo

THE STATE-OWNED NATIONAL Development Co. (NDC) yesterday raised P2 billion from a bond float, which was greeted by strong investor appetite as reflected by the huge volume of bids.

NDC Manager Arthur Aguilar told reporters that proceeds of the debt offering would be lent out to the National Irrigation Administratrion (NIA) and the Department of Agriculture to finance infrastructure projects that will help develop the country's agriculture sector.

The bond float was intended to support the government's rice-sufficiency program, which includes the rehabilitation of irrigation systems, farm-to-market roads, seeds distribution systems, and technology application, among others, the NDC said in a statement.

The bond float yesterday was the first of a series of debt offerings by NDC, which earlier got an approval to issue as much as P20 billion worth of bonds to fulfill the national government's objective of boosting economic growth through higher infrastructure spending.

The NDC bond float attracted P11.1 billion worth of bids, making the debt offer more than four times oversubscribed. NDC programmed to borrow P2 billion from yesterday's bond float.

The bonds, which carry a five-year term, fetched a coupon rate of 5.686 percent. Aguilar said the yield was the lowest among the coupon rates recorded in its previous bond offers since 1999.

"We are very happy with the rate. This will translate to a lower borrowing cost for the implementing agencies (NIA and Department of Agriculture)," Aguilar said.

He said the huge market appetite for the NDC bonds was due to the fact that these were tax-exempt and carried a guarantee by the national government.

The debt offering by NDC is one of the strategies identified by the government to fulfill its pump-priming goal despite the failure of Congress to pass the proposed P1.053-trillion national budget for 2006.

The national government is thus tied to operate with the 2005 reenacted budget. A bond float by NDC, which is outside the programming of the national budget, would therefore help raise funds for planned infrastructure spending.

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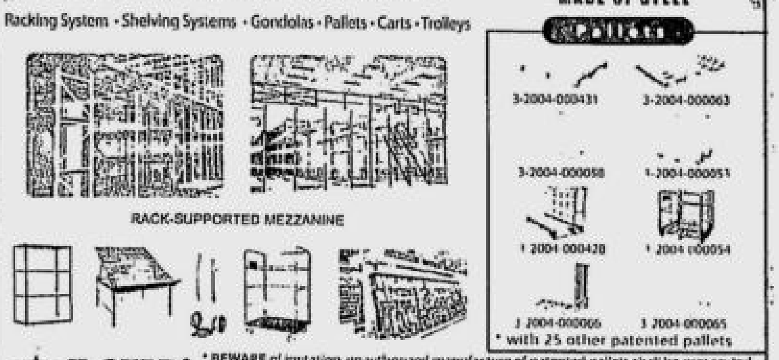

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DOLE averts workers' strike at Chevron

By Abigail L. Ho

THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYment has resolved a labor dispute between Chevron Philippines Inc. and sales force union Chevron Marketing Association-FFW (CMA-FFW), thwarting what could have been a potentially crippling strike for the oil firm.

In a decision dated June 23, Labor Undersecretary Manuel Imson ordered Chevron and CMA-FFW to execute a collective bargaining agreement covering the period from Oct. 1, 2005 to Sept. 30, 2008.

The CBA, he said, should include all the provisions that the DOLE approved, following its assumption of jurisdiction over the dispute in January.

CMA-FFW saw as most important the approval of the provision that had to do with the field personnel vehicle plan (FPVP), which allowed sales people to buy their service vehicles at 10 percent of the market price, plus taxes, after five years of use.

Management's desire to strike that benefit out was the primary reason for the CBA deadlock reached in December last year.

The DOLE, decision, however, sided with the employees.

Other disputed points that the DOLE resolved in favor of the union were the provision of a P100,000 multi-purpose loan at 5-percent interest and the non-presentation of receipts for meals covered by the P200-a-day meal subsidy.

Approved provisions in favor of management included the housing loan counter-offer of 250 percent of an employee's annual basic salary or basic pay multiplied by 32.5, and the non-conversion to cash of unused leaves.

No signing bonus would also be given to union members, considering that the CBA negotiations ended in an impasse and required the DOLE to step in.

The labor dispute stemmed from a CBA deadlock reached last Dec. 16 when, after a few months of bargaining and negotiation, the union and management failed to come up with a new agreement.

Gov't to review guarantee to port project

FINANCE SECRETARY MARGARITO TEVES said the Philippine Export Import Credit Agency (Philexim) was set to review a P1.6-billion guarantee extended to the builder and operator of a remote Sariaya, Quezon port and grains handling facility.

The port project came under fire from farmers and agriculture traders due to questions on the viability of the project, its location and the absence of the required infrastructure support.

Teves said some members of the Philexim board had raised concerns about the Sariaya port. Since the present board members themselves have questioned the project, it was important that a review be done, he said.

The current Philexim board is composed of Teves as chair; Virgilio Angelo, president; Bangko Sentral Governor Amado Tetangco, Neda Director General Romulo Neri, Trade Secretary Peter Favila, Luis Sicat, Rogelio Lombos, Genando de Leon and Quirino Baterna, members.

The technical capability and the business plan for the project have to be reviewed, Teves said.

Teves added that the Sariaya port operator was seeking another guarantee for an additional $4 million or P208 million in fresh loans, which it intended to take out from a number of banks. A consortium that included United Coconut Planters Bank and the Dutch ABN-Amro had lent the P1.6 billion for the Sariaya port project.

Teves said the review had become vital in view of the additional loans being sought by the operator.

The Sargen Integrated Federation had urged the government to explain why the loan for the project was given guarantee by Philexim. It also expressed concern that the port "is too distant and too risky to be useful to agriculture traders".

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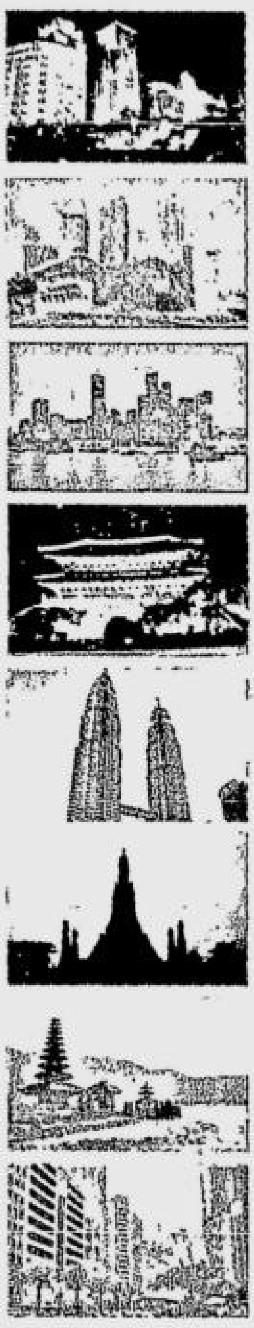

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Highlands taps BDO for share offer

Developer seeks to raise P2 billion in next 5 years

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

TAGAYTAY LEISURE HOMES DEveloper Highlands Prime Inc. (HPI), majority-owned by the SM Group, is going to the private equity market possibly in September to raise an initial P500 million from a proposed five-year preferred share offer, industry sources said.

The first tranche of P500 million is part of a total P2 billion offering which HPI is seeking to muster from private placement to qualified institutional or individual investors.

The terms of the proposed preferred share issue has yet to be approved by the company's board of directors and, later, by stockholders in a special meeting set on Aug. 17.

HPI has tapped BDO Capital as the issue manager and financial adviser for the proposed offer.

According to sources, HPI is setting aside P800 million to P1 billion this year for possible joint venture projects on its existing high-end residential projects outside of Tagaytay.

As part of its capital expansion, HPI will seek the approval of the Securities and Exchange Commission to hike its capital to P6 billion, from P4 billion, to fund present and upcoming projects.

Out of this increase, HPI will issue P2 billion worth of preferred shares.

HPI is spending roughly P1.5 billion over the next two years to finish its key projects in Tagaytay.

Expected to be completed this year is The Horizon at Tagaytay Midlands. The project is worth a little over P600 million.

The Horizon is a 9-hectare low-rise condominium development inside the exclusive Tagaytay Highlands and Midlands complex.

Designed with family-oriented golfers in mind, The Horizon will have several golfing and leisure amenities.

Golf cart owners will enjoy the convenience of driving along a specially designed golf cart path leading directly to the Midlands Golf Club and the 18-hole Tagaytay Midlands championship course.

Construction of The Horizon's first six, out of twelve, buildings is now in full swing and is scheduled for completion by July this year. All Horizon units come with four bedrooms, with an approximate floor area of 143 square meters.

Another major project, dubbed The Woodridge Park, costs roughly P700 to P800 million.

Woodridge will feature two to four bedroom units, measuring approximately 170 to 280 square meters, a few loft units, cathedral high ceilings and fireplaces for penthouse units.

The project is expected to generate P1.8 billion in revenue for 119 units. The first phase, or 65 units, of The Woodridge Park is expected to be completed by the end of 2007.

Ayala raises ₱5.8B from stocks offer

CONGLOMERATE AYALA CORP. has raised some $105 million or P5.8 billion from its preferred shares offering, which was said to be Asia's first publicly offered local currency hybrid deal.

Ayala easily sold 58 million preferred shares at P100 a share during its public offering last week. It generated more than P7 billion worth of orders.

About 20 percent of the total issue was picked up by retail investors, sources said.

This is the third time the country's oldest conglomerate has raised funds from the capital and debt markets. The first was in 2004 when it issued P7 billion worth of peso bonds, then the single biggest peso bond issue. The second time was in 2005 when it generated a total of P7.2 billion from a loan and a fixed-rate corporate note issue.

"This is the first time this kind of financial instrument was introduced to the (Asian) market. Investors are not yet comfortable with the inherent risk associated with the product but they derive comfort from the Ayala name," Ramon Opulencia, Ayala treasurer said in an interview.

Opulencia said the fresh funds would boost the company's cash pile to $330 million. As of June this year, Ayala has cash assets of $225 million, enough to cover for its maturing debts.

Its total remaining debts as of June this year stood at $23.8 million. Next year, Ayala will have outstanding debt of $80 million.

"This is a unique opportunity to adopt an offshore-inspired model in the local setting while addressing local investor demand for quality investments and, at the same time, addressing our own need for raising pesos at the best possible terms," Opulencia said.

The preferred shares will pay a dividend of 9.4578 percent in the first five years, which was approximately flat compared with the five-year "Mart" benchmark rate for government bond yields at the time of pricing. Payment of current dividends will be cumulative. The preferred shares are non-convertible into common shares and will have no voting and preemptive rights.

Ayala tapped seven banks for its share offer, namely, BPI Capital Corp., Hongkong and Shanghai Bank, First Metro Investment Corp., PCI Capital Corp., BDO Capital & Investment Corp., China Banking Corp. and Insular Investment and Trust Corp. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

GOINGS-ON

South Luzon confab

THE 15TH SOUTH LUZON AREA BUSINESS CONFERENCE, ORGANIZED BY the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Quezon-Lucena Chamber of Commerce and Industry, kicks off today, July 20, with a Trade Expo in SM Lucena.

With the theme Seizing Global Opportunities through Local Dynamism, the 15th Solab aims to provide a venue to prepare local entrepreneurs for global opportunities in investments, joint ventures, and business matching in the international market.

Industry and government personalities are expected to address this gathering, including Rep. Joey Salceda, Trade and Industry Secretary Peter Favila, Bangko Sentral Deputy Governor Diwa Gunigundo, Presidential Adviser on Entrepreneurship Jose Maria Concepcion.

New name

MASTERCARD INC. recently announced that its principal operating subsidiary, MasterCard International, has introduced a new corporate name, MasterCard Worldwide.

The company is also unveiling a new corporate signature and adopting a new corporate tagline, The Heart of Commerce, to reflect its globally integrated structure and its strategic vision of advancing commerce worldwide.

Also, the company is keeping its symbol that shows interlocking circles on its credit cards and at merchant acceptance locations around the world.

Talk on tax savings

FOR THE FIRST time, the public will get the chance to listen to and learn from authorities in the field of taxation, who will share their knowledge and experience on how to save on taxes the right and legal way.

The Center for Global Best Practices (842-7148 to 59, www.cgbp.org) is holding a 2-day seminar titled, "Optimizing Tax Savings and Deductions" on Aug. 24 and 25, 2006 at The Peninsula Manila.

The program will feature expert speakers, such as Atty. Rosario S. Bernaldo, a CPA-lawyer with extensive experience in tax planning and tax minimization strategies, and former Revenue Commissioner Liwayway Vinzons-Chato, who also has the distinction of being the second longest serving and, so far, the only female commissioner in the history of the bureau.

The seminar will also feature Atty. Nelson Aspe, who is currently BIR regional director of Makati City.

Buy Pinoy Fair

THE PHILIPPINE Exporters Confederation Inc., Department of Trade and Industry and Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry Inc. are holding the 10th Buy Pinoy Exporters Fair on Aug. 9 to 13 at the Megatrade Hall 1 at SM Megamall.

The fair will showcase top quality export products such as holiday decors, housewares, fashion accessories and various food products.

EasyCall reports turnaround in earnings

By Riza T. Olchondra

EASYCALL COMMUNICATIONS Philippines Inc. (ECPI) has recorded P14.9 million in earnings from January to June this year after a period of restructuring and sale of non-performing assets.

During the company's annual stockholders' meeting yesterday, company president Socorro Z. Niro said that the firm managed to post a turnaround from losses amounting to P31.09 million in 2004, to an audited income of more than P20 million at end-2005.

In the first half of this year, EasyCall registered net earnings of more than P14 million.

Carlos Severino, EasyCall treasurer, said that the company benefited greatly from the sale of all its units in Galleria condominium. The company earned P28.98 million from the transaction.

The company also gained from the integration of its EasyCall e-Services Inc. with Transnational e-Business Solutions Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of EasyCall's majority shareholder, Transnational Diversified Corp.

The consolidation, which is still ongoing, saved EasyCall about P14.65 million in operating expenses as of end-2005.

In a drastic measure, EasyCall also had to trim its core staff from 146 in 2004 to just ten in early 2006.

Another factor in EasyCall's turnaround is its 25-percent stake in business outsourcing provider e-Performax. The call center's continued growth actually earned for the company about P3 million in profits in the first half of the year.

After the president's message and the treasurer's report, board director Modesto N. Cervantes praised the management of ECPI for its feat.

"Turning the company around from a more than P30-million loss to P14.9 million in revenue takes some doing," Cervantes said.

Stocks . . .

From page B1

The composite index fell 10.21 points to 2,181.57 after trading between 2,178.61 and 2,198.06. Volume was light at 809.5 million shares worth P585.8 million.

The broader all-shares index fell 6.21 points to 1,365.74.

Losers led gainers 42 to 20, with 59 stocks unchanged.

"There is an air of cautiousness which will likely remain as investors wait for a resolution of the stand-off in the Middle East," said Mark Alan Canizares of CitisecOnline.com.

Dealers expect risk-averse investors to remain sidelined amid the geopolitical worries but there may be some bargain hunting, especially those companies that are expected to report strong earnings for the second quarter. *AFP*

Aussie firm . . .

From page B1

and Geosciences Bureau that it has also acquired the services of ANZ Bank to lead the debt financing for the project.

The company needs $81 million to develop the Didipio copper-gold mine, which has an estimated ore resource of 120 million tons. The company estimates that the Didipio ore resource contains 0.61 percent copper and 1.6 gram per ton of gold and a mine life of 15 years.

"Part of the bank requirements is conducting a thorough due-diligence of the mining project's social, environment and technical reports," the report added.

In February, the Board of Investments approved fiscal incentives for the Didipio mining activity.

The mining project will enjoy incentives under a pioneer status, which means it is entitled to an income tax holiday of six years, among others. The mining firm has committed to export its entire production.

The Didipio project is under a financial or technical assistance agreement (FTAA) with the government, which effectively authorizes the Climax Mining subsidiary a 100-percent equity in the project.

A Supreme Court ruling in December 2004 said an FTAA scheme does not violate the Constitution, which restricts foreign equity in projects that deal with the exploitation of the country's natural resources to 40 percent.

Tokyo up as oil falls, dollar firms on US data

SINGAPORE—JAPANESE STOCKS yesterday rose for the first time in six sessions after a drop in crude oil prices overnight and strong US earnings raised optimism about the outlook for the world's largest economy.

The dollar traded near three-month highs against the yen and the euro while gold fell to one-week lows around $626 an ounce, down from an eight-week high of $676 hit on Monday, as the dollar's gains made the metal expensive for Asian buyers.

European stocks are likely to follow the Asians and Wall Street higher with bookmakers in London expecting Britain's FTSE 100 Index, France's CAC 40 and Germany's DAX indexes to open 24-34 points higher.

"The drop in oil prices and the attendant rebound in US stocks helped boost expectations for the Tokyo market," said Toshihiko Matsuno, an assistant general manager of investment research at SMBC Friend Securities.

The Nikkei stock average closed 0.4 percent higher at 14,500.26, following five straight days of declines when it lost 7 percent.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng was up 0.6 percent and Singapore's Straits Times Index was 0.5 percent firmer in mid-afternoon dealings.

On Wall Street, the Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 0.5 percent while the tech-heavy Nasdaq Composite Index gained 0.3 percent following robust earnings from blue-chip companies like Coca-Cola Co. and United Technologies Corp.

The dollar held on to overnight gains after the US producer price index rose a higher-than-expected 0.5 percent in June, raising expectations of yet another rate increase by the US Federal Reserve in August.

Fed funds futures indicate a roughly 50 percent chance of a rate rise next month.

US Treasuries fell after the data on Tuesday, dragging down Japanese government bonds from one-month highs on Wednesday, as traders bet the Fed would raise rates to 5.5 percent next month, from 5.25 percent, which would be its 18th quarter-point rise in two years.

Asian stocks had taken a pounding in the past week when gold prices surged and oil hit a record high following the escalation of conflict between Israel and Lebanese guerrillas that sparked fears it would suck in Iran and Syria.

US crude oil futures yesterday traded at about $73.90 per barrel after dropping to a low of $73.50 in New York on Tuesday from as high as $77.74 the day before. They hit a record high of $78.40 on Friday.

Crude oil futures have nearly doubled in the past two years, partly because of conflicts in key producers such as Iraq and Nigeria and, more recently, because of security concerns over Iran's nuclear program.

"Despite the fall yesterday, oil prices have risen so much there are worries about economic growth, so people are waiting for what (Fed Chairman Ben) Bernanke will say later today." *Reuters*

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of July 19, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	31.5	31.5	31.5	31.5	1,003,200
Bank of the Phil. Islands	49	49	49	49	877,800
Citystate Savings Bank	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	300
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	370,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	73	73	73	73	12,300
International Exch. Bank	41.5	41.5	41.5	41.5	1,500
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	35.5	35.5	35	35	260,000
Philippine National Bank	34	34.5	34	34.5	24,500
Phil. Savings Bank	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5	3,000
Security Bank Corp.	46.5	47	46	47	132,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	43	43	43	43	200
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	1.68	1.76	1.68	1.74	683,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1600	1600	1600	1600	30
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1	1	1	1	10,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	211	211	211	211	1,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2000	2000	1990	1990	270
Ivantage Corp.	1.28	1.28	1.26	1.26	1,425,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	44	44.5	44	44.5	366,800
Manila Electric Co. A	14.75	14.75	14.75	14.75	11,700
Manila Electric Co. B	24.25	24.25	23.5	24	625,400
Manila Water Co. Inc.	7.5	7.6	7.5	7.6	254,000
Petron Corp.	3.95	3.95	3.85	3.95	1,993,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	250,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
CADP Group Corp.	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	17,000
Cen Azucar de Tarlac	3	3	3	3	10,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	23.5	23.5	23.5	23.5	7,700
Jollibee Foods Corp.	30.5	31.5	30.5	30.5	567,800
Pancake House Inc.	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	10,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	3.05	3.05	3.05	3.05	117,000
San Miguel Corp. A	65.5	66	65.5	66	55,500
San Miguel Corp. B	70.5	71	70.5	71	75,800
Universal Robina Corp	19	19	19	19	275,400
Vitarich Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	200,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	160,000
Engineering Equip. Inc	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	457,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.55	4.55	4.5	4.55	152,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	10,000
Republic Cement Corp.	1.24	1.24	1.24	1.24	70,000
CHEMICALS					
Interphil Labs Inc. A	0.81	0.81	0.81	0.81	30,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Global Equities, Inc.	0.08	0.0825	0.08	0.08	5,000,000
Panasonic Mfg Phil Corp.	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.7	10,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	1,000,000
Ayala Corp.	390	392.5	380	380	57,020
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.1	5.2	5.1	5.2	206,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	250,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	350,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10	10.25	10	10.25	22,800
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.06	1.08	5,083,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.9	1,282,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.8	728,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	6	6	6	6	116,000
Jolliville Holdings Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	10,000
Keppel Holdings	1	1	1	1	500,000
Pacifica	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	5,000,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	0.88	0.88	0.88	0.88	40,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.54	0.54	0.54	0.54	1,030,000
Sm Investments Corp.	215	217	215	215	10,010
South China Resources Inc.	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	100,000
Wellex Industries Inc	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.085	400,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	12.25	12.25	12	12.25	2,221,400
Belle Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	2,192,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	50,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	2.16	2.2	2.16	2.2	611,000
C&P Homes Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	105,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	60,000
Empire East Land Inc	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	620,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.32	1.34	1.3	1.3	9,693,000
Interport Res.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	2,000,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	1,550,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	270,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.38	1.38	1.36	1.38	7,769,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.205	0.21	0.205	0.21	3,820,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	10.75	10.75	10.5	10.5	35,600
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.25	4,800,000
SM Development Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	438,000
Sm Prime Holdings Inc.	7.7	7.7	7.5	7.6	757,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	1,500,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.25	600
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	1.22	1.3	1.22	1.3	201,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	300,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	955	955	900	900	26,510
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.4	3.45	3.4	3.4	758,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1840	1845	1820	1825	105,220
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.175	0.175	0.17	0.17	1,200,000
Ionics Inc.	1.82	1.82	1.82	1.82	27,000
Philweb Corp.	0.031	0.032	0.031	0.032	15,200,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	14	14	14	14	144,200
Keppel Phils Marine Inc.	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	10,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	5,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	1,640,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	60,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	450,000
Philippine Racing Club	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	2,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	1,000,000
EDUCATION					
Centro Escolar University	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.4	14,000
Ipeople Inc.	3.1	3.1	3.05	3.05	121,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.16	2.2	2.1	2.1	1,981,000
Paxys Inc.	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	717,900
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.45	436,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	3.55	3.55	3.4	3.4	636,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	24,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	1,953,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.28	0.28	0.26	0.26	29,050,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.31	0.31	0.29	0.3	23,140,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	264,400,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.028	87,900,000
Omico Corp.	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	268,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	3.95	4	3.95	3.95	968,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	4	4	3.9	3.9	3,366,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	26.5	27	26.5	26.5	36,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.36	0.36	0.35	0.36	1,480,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	260,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	220,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	8,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	1.24	1.24	1.22	1.22	728,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1.24	1.24	1.24	1.24	410,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	16.25	16.5	16.25	16.5	97,000
PREFERRED					
PLDT (10% Pref) Series M	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	200
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	100

CURRENCIES

July 19, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.799680	1.000000	52.6620
Japan	Yen	0.006816	0.008523	0.4488
United Kingdom	Pound	1.460216	1.826000	96.1608
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.102868	0.128637	6.7743
Switzerland	Franc	0.638365	0.798276	42.0388
Canada	Dollar	0.703944	0.880282	46.3574
Singapore	Dollar	0.501838	0.627549	33.0480
Australia	Dollar	0.596820	0.746324	39.3029
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.121336	2.652731	139.6981
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.213236	0.266652	14.0424
Brunei	Dollar	0.500269	0.625586	32.9446
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000086	0.000108	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.020961	0.026212	1.3804
UAE	Dirham	0.217731	0.272272	14.3384
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.250500	65.8538
Argentina	Peso	0.259636	0.324675	17.0980
Brazil	Real	0.364037	0.455228	23.9732
Denmark	Kroner	0.134030	0.167605	8.8264
India	Rupee	0.017157	0.021455	1.1299
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.217275	0.271702	14.3084
Mexico	New Peso	0.073229	0.091573	4.8224
New Zealand	Dollar	0.500113	0.625391	32.9343
Norway	Kroner	0.125987	0.157547	8.2967
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013279	0.016606	0.8745
South Africa	Rand	0.111423	0.139334	7.3376
Korea	Won	0.000835	0.001044	0.0550
Sweden	Kroner	0.107966	0.135011	7.1099
Syria	Pound	0.015405	0.019264	1.0145
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024343	0.030441	1.6031
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000373	0.000466	0.0245

UBS bullish on RP

From page B1

fiscal position for the first six months of the year to a deficit of only P31.5 billion. The six-month figure was way below the P90.4-billion ceiling set for the January-to-June period.

The surplus in June was partly attributed to the P50.4 billion in taxes collected by the BIR, higher than its P46-billion target for the month. The higher-than-programmed tax collection in June was a turnaround from the shortfalls in the previous months.

"Looking ahead, the implication of this is that we should be past the seasonal worst. August-November revenue could rise to help meet the target," UBS said.

The BIR is tasked with collecting P675.4 billion in taxes for the full year to help achieve the government's target of reducing the 2006 budget deficit to only P125 billion or lower. Last year, the deficit stood at P146.8 billion.

Pascual Laboratories: Upholding a legacy of caring

THE BAROMETER OF SUCCESS IS different for everyone. Some measure it in terms of what they've achieved in their education, career or even in material wealth. But for the Pascual family, their success in their business lies primarily in their legacy of caring for the Filipino consumers.

It takes more than just a dream to make it to the top and play in the big leagues. For a Filipino company like Pascual Laboratories Inc (Pascuallab), going up against giant multinational pharmaceutical companies entailed innovativeness, creative marketing, unyielding determination and steadfast commitment to uphold the vision of its predecessor-to provide Filipinos with affordable quality medicines.

Sixty years ago, Pascuallab was founded in Balut, Tondo by Isosceles and Leonora Pascual. Both were Chemistry graduates from the University of the Philippines. Their goal was to provide affordable medicines, which were in short supply at that time when the country was still reeling from the devastation of World War II. In a one-room facility, the couple offered simple vitamin supplements and anti-TB medicines, which were highly in demand at that time as vitamin deficiency and tuberculosis were rampant. The couple's winning formula of manufacturing medicines locally as opposed to importing them as finished products allowed them to sell their products at a lesser cost, giving Filipinos a better, more affordable alternative.

This is one of the success secrets of Pascuallab. It is a complete pharmaceutical company capable of manufacturing and selling its own products. But in order to better serve the market, expanding and diversifying product offerings are needed. Thus, Pascuallab forged numerous licensing agreements with foreign pharmaceutical companies. For its own brands, most are priced 20 to 50 percent lower than foreign brands in the market. Product pricing is determined keeping the needs and capabilities of low-income families in mind.

Pascual Laboratories Inc (Pascuallab) attributes its growth and resilience to their shared corporate core values of teamwork, innovation, moral uprightness, excellence and social responsibility. According to Pascuallab president Manny Salazar, "We are a conscientious company that is God-centered. We try to incorporate spirituality and morality in the way we run our business. We value our employees, our suppliers, our industry partners and everyone that contributes to the fulfillment of our corporate mission. Our sense of entrepreneurship is shaped by social responsibility. Ultimately, all our efforts are done for the glory of God and the betterment of human life."

The history of Pascuallab, spanning six decades, mirrors this philosophy. Its pioneering subsidiary, Pharex Health Corporation, is a socially relevant milestone that promotes the use of generics in the country, therefore giving Filipinos more affordable options. In addition, Pascuallab is the first pharmaceutical company that tied up with a government agency to develop and market herbal medicines made from local plants such as Lagundi, Sambong and Ampalaya. This collaboration allows sharing of expertise and knowledge through research. Product innovations resulting from their joint ventures also earn royalties for the government. Pascuallab established Altermed Corporation to market the herbal medicines developed by government research bodies. It employs a vast workforce, thereby creating income-generating opportunities for numerous Filipinos especially farmers/planters of medicinal plants.

In the near future, Pascuallab aims to implement more projects like these. Salazar expressed, "As we celebrate our 60th anniversary, we will work to achieve greater success because the more successful we are, the more people we will be able to help."

As such, the company is gearing up for further growth and expansion. Pascuallab is looking at doubling the business in the next five years. It boldly aims to enter the global arena, employing the "niche marketing" approach, which caters to the needs of focused markets. Pascuallab's research efforts emphasize on the innovation of product formulations established from active ingredients whereby patents are no longer exclusive to pioneering pharmaceutical companies. This will allow the company to create or reformulate medicines that address the needs of consumers and ensure that they will get the best medicines at the most affordable prices possible.

The first step towards Pascuallab's dream to go global is to penetrate the Asian market. Armed with a sincere intention of extending the caring service that it has afforded Filipinos, Pascuallab will give its best to make this dream possible.

MISAMIS OCCIDENTAL RESIDENT IS P100,000 RICHER IN MINOLA PROMO

ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS
SARAP MANALO
SARAP MINOLA

Thirty-year-old Maribeth Deduyco of the Northern Mindanao region is the sixth winner of P100,000 cash in the ongoing Sarap Manalo, Sarap Minola promo of Minola Cooking Oil. A resident of Don Bernardo A Neri, Calamba, Misamis Occidental, she was awarded the check in Cagayan de Oro City in simple rites attended by San Pablo Manufacturing Corp VP for domestic marketing Dr. Antonio V. Concepcion, product manager April Ocampo, and area sales manager Jun Payot. Sarap Manalo, Sarap Minola is a consumer text promo which runs till August. To join, one has to purchase any of Minola's participating products with the unique promo codes. These number combinations should be sent via text to 2966. Winners get P100,000 for the weekly draws, and P1 million for the grand draw, which will be held on Aug. 11.

Search for Philippine Science High School scholars

THE SEARCH IS ON FOR SCHOLARS OF the Philippine Science High School system for SY 2006-2007. It is open to all graduating elementary students for the current school year who belong to the upper 10 percent of their graduating class or those who have special aptitude in science and math, as certified by their school principal. Applicants must be Filipino citizens with no pending application as immigrants in any foreign country; not be more than 15 years of age by June 2006; in good health, fit to undergo a rigorous academic program; of good moral character; and should not have previously taken the PSHS National Competitive Examination (NCE).

All applicants must submit a fully accomplished application form with 4 identical recent 1X1 pictures, P75 non-refundable processing fee and two (2) long window envelopes with P9 stamps. Application forms are available in any of the PSHS campuses or DOST regional offices. For more information you may call tel. nos. 926-5701 or 924-0614 or visit the PSHS website at www.pshs.edu.ph. PSHS NCE application forms are not for sale and no reservation fee is required. Deadline for submission of application forms is on Aug.25.

The PSHS NCE is a two-step screening process. The first screening, scheduled on Oct. 14, is the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) that consists of tests in verbal and abstract reasoning and mathematics. The second screening is the Science and Math Aptitude Test (SMAT) that consists of tests in science and mathematics scheduled on Dec. 9.

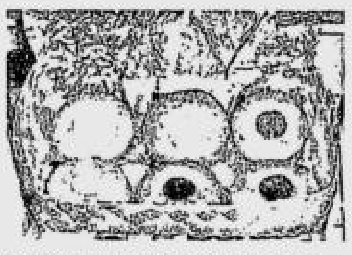
This school year, 2006-2007, the PSHS system has a total of 2,920 scholars in nine (9) PSHS campuses located in San Ildefonso, Ilocus Sur; Bayombong, Nueva Viscaya; Diliman, Quezon City; Goa, Camarines Sur; Palo, Leyte; Jaro, Ilo-ilo City; Talaytay, Argao, Cebu; Tubod, Lanao del Norte; and in Tugbok, Davao City. The PSHS system is one of the agencies under the Department of Science and Technology which contributes to the expansion and development of the country's scientific and technological manpower.

PAPA BANANA CATSUP, NAT'L NUTRITION COUNCIL VISIT SCHOOLS FOR NUTRITION MONTH

True to its mission of promoting proper nourishment among children and to celebrate Nutrition Month, Papa Banana Catsup recently signed a memorandum of agreement with the National Nutrition Council that will see both institutions work hand in hand with public and private schools in educating teachers, pupils and parents on the role of nutrition in the development of a 'bright child'. The program will benefit a total of 50 schools in Greater Manila Area, North and Central Luzon, Bicol and Mindanao. The tour will feature a nutrition symposium, a Snack Mobile Carnival program and a fun time learning nutrition. Photo shows (from right): Dir. Elsa Bayani of National Nutrition Council and Cathy Sanchez of Papa Banana Catsup during the MOA signing.

ProductFILES

Mister Donut introduces new flavors at Lucbanin Festival Manila



FIESTA ALL-YEAR-ROUND IS THE overall experience given by Mister Donut's new flavors introduced recently at Century Park Hotel's "Lucbanin Festival Manila" which highlighted Café in the Park's festival food experience. Mister Donut's new set of delectable variants called Fiesta Donuts come in the savory taste of favorite Pinoy fiesta desserts like Ube halaya, Sago't Gulaman, Leche Flan, Mais con Hielo, Buco Pandan, and Saging at Langka flavors. Filipinos no longer have to wait for festivals to dig in to the sumptuous taste of fiesta delicacies of their liking. Now, they can get a load of these fiesta delights customized as their much loved donuts. Lucbanin Festival Manila also showcased a Mister Donut co-sponsored fashion event which displayed the coveted products of the people from Lucban, Quezon. Banahaw Blues, as the night was called, featured the winners of "Mutya ng Lucban." Expect more of Mister Donut's Fiesta Donuts in the festivals to come. "Maki-fiesta araw-araw" and visit the nearest Mister Donut outlet to get a load of fiesta desserts with Mister Donut's Fiesta Donuts.

YALE FORKLIFTS FOR FAST SERVICES, NESTLÉ CABUYAO PLANT

Fast Services Corp, service provider of Nestlé Phils Inc has chosen to use exclusively the new Yale 'Veracitor' series forklifts for its Nestlé Cabuyao plant operations. The new Yale 'Veracitor' is considered the most operator-friendly forklift in the market today. Yaletrak Phils Inc now on its 30th year is an ISO 9001-2000 certified company, and is the exclusive distributor of Yale forklifts and other material handling equipment of Yale USA. Signing the contract are (from left) Lirio Escano Jr., Yaletrak Phils Inc president and Renie Samontan, Fast Services vice president with Mylene Caballero, Yaletrak Phils Inc operations director and Manuel Onrejas Jr., Fast Service operations manager, looking on.

NEW PMA PRESIDENT

Dr. Jose A. Sabili was sworn into office as the youngest elected unopposed president of the Philippine Medical Association by Dr. Antonio Oposa at Manila Hotel last May 20. His vision for the association is to unite and integrate the entire medical profession and protect the rights and prerogatives of Filipino physicians. He was born on July 6, 1960 in San Juan Batangas. Graduated BMST UST'81 MD, Perpetual College of Medicine '85. He is the medical director of Dr. Sabili General Hospital 1991-present. President of San Juan Doctors Hospital, Batangas 1997-present. Recipient of such awards as: Topics Award 2001, Icasiano Award 1st Prize 2001, PMA Most Outstanding Physician. He is married to Dr. Mary Jane Sabili with 4 children; Adrian, Aris, Arian and Aldrile.

TransCo

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION
SOUTH LUZON OPERATION & MAINTENANCE
Tel. No.: (02) 5206776; (02) 9814595/9814539/9814576/
9814577/9814578 LOC. 4002; (049) 4114500 LOC. 4002

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
AD NO. TRANSCO 2006-08B

1. The *NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION, South Luzon Operation and Maintenance* (TRANSCO-SLOM) through the *2006 Corporate Budget approved by the TransCo Board* intends to apply the sum as indicated below being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the following Purchase Requisitions (PR). Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

DATE OF BIDDING: August 16, 2006 / 9:00 AM

BID SCHEDULE	PR NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	QTY.	APPROVED BUDGET	PRE-BID CONFERENCE
F2	D1-CAV-06-18732	Transformer Bushing, 230KV Transformer Bushing, 115KV	1 pc 1 pc	Php 2,800,000.00 Php 1,800,000.00	Aug. 2 9:00AM
F3	D1-06-18649	Fault Indicator	84 pcs	Php 2,940,000.00	Aug. 2 9:00AM
F5	D1-06-17634 D1-CAV-06-18435	Insulators, Porcelain for 230KV, Tension, 36,000 lbs.	1 lot	Php 9,759,000.00	Aug. 2 9:00AM
F6	D1-06-17634 D1-CAV-06-18435 D30-06-22019 D30-06-19058	Insulators, Porcelain for 230KV, Suspension, 25,000 lbs. Insulators, Porcelain for 69	1 lot	Php13,050,000.00	Aug. 2 9:00AM
F7	D1-06-17629 D1-CAV-06-18435 D30-06-22019 D30-06-19058	115KV, 15,000 lbs.	1 lot	Php11,783,200.00	Aug. 2 9:00AM

2. The *TRANSCO-SLOM* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the aforementioned Bid Schedules. Delivery schedule of the GOODS shall be in accordance with the bid documents. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested bidders may obtain further information from the Materials Management Services, TransCo-SLOM and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 A.M. to 12: NN and 1:00 to 5:00 P.M. from Monday to Friday.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from July 11, 2006 to August 9, 2006 at the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of *Php500.00 minimum, or 0.01% of the ABC whichever is higher per bidding schedule.* The method of payment will be *Cash.* The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. TransCo-SLOM will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on the date and time stated above at the OAVP Conference Room.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on the date and time stated above. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in any of the forms indicated in Section III Bid Data Sheet of the bid documents, in Philippine Pesos or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be on the date and time stated above at the OAVP Conference Room. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
9. The *National Transmission Corporation-South Luzon Operations and Maintenance* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

National Transmission Corporation, South Luzon Operation & Maintenance
Engr. Ruben G. Castuera, BAC Chairman
San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna
Telefax No. (632)520-6776
Website : www.transco.ph

R. G. CASTUERA
Chairman, Bids & Awards Committee

(PDI--July 20 & 27, 2006)

Office of the President
BCDA
Bases Conversion and Development Authority

INVITATION FOR PROPOSALS
ASSET DISPOSITION PROGRAM - PHASE 3

The Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) is inviting interested proponents to participate in Phase 3 of BCDA's Asset Disposition Program (ADP Phase 3). ADP Phase 3 involves the development and privatization of the approximately 12,036 square meter - Expanded Big Delta Lots (formerly known as the Government Center for Investment) located in Fort Bonifacio.

Interested proponents may submit their Letters of Interest to BCDA and can purchase the Terms of Reference (TOR) for ADP Phase 3 that outlines, among others, the requirements that will enable proponents to participate in the privatization.

The TOR for ADP Phase 3 will be ready for distribution to interested proponents starting on 21 July 2006 at the BCDA office. A non-refundable cost of the TOR is Ten Thousand Pesos (Php10,000.00), for each TOR, payable to the BCDA in Cash or Manager's Check.

A conference among interested proponents is tentatively set on 09 August 2006. The objective of the conference is to discuss the property that form part of ADP Phase 3, the TOR and other clarifications from interested proponents. Interested proponents will be informed of the final schedule and venue of the conference through contact numbers submitted to the BCDA.

Interested proponents can direct their inquiries to:

THE CHAIRMAN
ADP PHASE 3 COMMITTEE (ADP-3 Com)
Bases Conversion and Development Authority
2/f Bonifacio Technology Center, 31st St. cor. 2nd Ave.,
Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, Metro Manila

or they can contact Ms. Aileen R. Zosa or Ms. Bambie L. Andal at telephone numbers 816-6666 or 816-1043.

(Sgd.) **VICTOR V. ZABLAN**
Chairman
ADP Phase 3 Committee

(PDI–July 20, 26 & August 2, 2006)

In commemoration of the
1st Death Anniversary
of our beloved

Dra. Milagros Perez Agojo

December 15, 1952 – July 20, 2005

Holy Masses will be offered today, July 20, 2006
at the following churches:

St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Parish *Magallanes Village, Makati*	6:15 a.m.
St. John The Evangelist *Tanauan, Batangas*	6:00 a.m.
St. John The Evangelist *Calamba, Laguna*	6:00 a.m.
Don Bosco Parish Church *Makati City*	6:00 a.m.
St. James Parish Church *Ayala Alabang Village*	6:00 a.m.
St. Andrew Parish Church *Bel-Air, Makati*	6:00 a.m.
Parish of Sto. Niño *Pandacan, Manila*	6:00 a.m.
St. Genevied Church *Panorama City, California*	8:00 a.m.
Most Holy Name of Jesus *East Orange, New Jersey*	8:00 a.m.

Please remember her in your prayers.

Grace Jamias Balmaceda

It is with profound sadness that we announce the untimely passing of our sister, GRACE, on Friday, July 14, 2006 in Long Island, New York, USA.

Grace is survived by her children, MICHAEL BENJAMIN AND MARY MARGARET, Her daughter-in-law, SUZANNE, and her grandsons, KEVIN MICHAEL and JAYDEN PASCHALL.

Michael and Mary will be taking their mother home to the Philippines to be laid to rest with our parents, the late MONICA and CORNELIO BALMACEDA and our brother, the late CORNELIO BALMACEDA, JR.

Her cremated remains will be at the Capilla de San Francisco, Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City on Friday, July 21, 2006. Interment will be held on Sunday, July 23, 2006, at the Manila Memorial Park after the mass at the Capilla de San Francisco at 2:00 in the afternoon.

Grace's vivacious spirit, steadfast determination and unswerving faith will live in our hearts and continue to inspire us all. Please remember her in your prayers.

ERLINDA & WILFREDO CALABIO, VIRGINIA & MAURO CASTRO, GLORIA & ANTONIO GOZUM, ROSEMARIE & MANUEL LAZARO, PATTY DE GUZMAN

"Eternal life will swallow up that which can die. God made us for this very reason and He has given us the Spirit as a guarantee that we will live again." — 2 Corinthians 5:4-5

DR. ERNESTO MENGUITO ALMEDA

Peacefully joined his Creator
on 19 July 2006 at the age of 80.

He shall be missed by his dearest wife, **Nitang**; children: **Connie & Ramil, Annie & Titoy, Maloy, Jun & Erica**; grandchildren: **Inna, Isabel, Ian, Tiffany, Tricia & Mico**, and relatives.

His remains lie in state at Chapel – 3, Garden of Memories Memorial Park & Chapels, Inc., Pateros, Metro Manila.

Interment will be on Saturday, July 22, 2006 at the Garden of Memories Memorial Park, Pateros, Metro Manila at 3:00 p.m.

"Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free. I'm following the path God has laid you see, I took His hand when I heard His call. I turned my back and left it all."
Anonymous

Our Dearly Beloved

RITA YANG ALANDY DY

Peacefully joined our Lord on July 15, 2006 at the age of 79.

Her loving husband **Luis**; children and grandchildren **Lawrence & Evelyn (Queen, Kay & King), Lynn & Charlie Yu Galan (Dexter, Spencer & Stanley), Lloyd (†), Lianne & Jerry Tiu (Cheryl, Christopher, Charles, Christine & Christian), Leonard & Annie (Andrea & Lance)**; relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Santuario de San Antonio Parish, Capilla dela Virgen, Forbes Park, Makati City.

Interment will be on Saturday, July 22 at the Manila Memorial Park, Dasmariñas Cavite after the 7:30 a.m. Mass.

Please omit flowers.

Our Dearly Beloved

ENGR. FELIPE A. CADOC, SR.

Died in the Grace of our Lord
on July 18, 2006 at the age of 91.

His loving wife, **Mary**; children **Min & Ikbal Becharry, Flor & Amado de Jesus, Lulu & Sidney Obillo, Wilma & Tony Garrido, Jun & Bhe Cadoc, Mayette & Cesar Tiongson, Ellen & Elmer Catuira** and **Jaine & Kiko Reyes**; beloved grandchildren and sister **Celing** and relatives request to pray for eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at Funeraria Paz, G. Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will be on July 22, 2006 at the Holy Cross Memorial Park, Novaliches, Q.C. at 10:00 A.M.

Life is real! Life is earnest;
And the grave is not its goal;
"Dust thou are, to dust returnest,"
Was not spoken of the soul.
- Psalm of Life

Our Dear Mom

Dr. Emilia Osuna-David

UST Medicine, Class 1940
Peacefully joined her Maker on 18 July 2006
at the age of 92.

Her bereaved husband **Lt. Col. Faustino P. David** (†), children **Victor** and wife **Ruth Bañares, Vergel** (†), **Virginia "Chito"** and husband **Ulysses Guillermo**; grandchildren **Carmela, Leandro** and **Daniel**; **Andrei Stelian** and **Juan Miguel**, request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, on Wednesday, July 19, 2006. She will be moved to the family residence in Nagcarlan, Laguna on Thursday, July 20, Tel. No. (049) 563-1633.

Interment will be at the Nagcarlan Municipal Cemetery after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at the Nagcarlan Catholic Church.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
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❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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PSTD convention set

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The Philippine Society for Training and Development is launching a convention on July 19 at the Philippine Plaza Hotel.

To all Human Resource and Learning Professionals in Organizations: This is another learning experience for you! A chance to get to know who's who in the training profession. A chance to know what's new and beneficial to your organizations in terms of human resource, OD and training. A chance to learn the best interventions you can take home with you. There's more to see, more to know, more to learn.

To all Consultants: Let them know who you are and what you can do for these organizations. It's your chance to showcase your expertise, your products and programs and gain a wider network! There are still more untapped organizations who just may actually benefit from your services. Take this chance now!

To all Service Providers: From copiers to caterers to conference venues, the human resource experts just can't do without you! We in the human resource field need your support in our operations (training materials, conference venues, teambuilding locations, caterers, video production, etc) and we would be glad to have you as our partners. Show us what you've got and we just might strike a deal with you!

Registration ongoing with the PSTD Secretariat at 8139072 or 8140372

MORE POWER FOR CEBU

National Transmission Corporation (TransCo) President Dr. Alan T. Ortiz (extreme right) lauds Cebu Governor Gwendolyn F. Garcia (second from left) for her tenacity in pushing for the success of the power supply agreement (PSA) among Napocor, TransCo and KepCo-Salcon in line with the construction of a 2 x 100 MW coal-fired thermal plant in Naga, Cebu. Dr. Ortiz, NPC president Cyril del Callar (extreme left) and KepCo president Lee Gil-Gu signed the PSA at the governor's office last Friday, July 14. Cebu provincial board members John Bolo and Victor Maambong came as witnesses to the historic event.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY
BOARD OF INVESTMENTS
Industry & Investment Building
385 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City, Philippines
Tel. (632) 897-6682 Fax Nos. (632) 895-3521 (IPG)
(632) 895-3981 (IG) (632) 895-3978 (TSG) (632) 890-3051 (AD)
E-mail OSAC@boi.gov.ph Homepage http://www.boi.gov.ph
Cable address: INVESTBOARD P.O. Box 1872 Makati

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **GLOBUS BUSINESS OUTSOURCING, INC. doing business under the name and style of MTC ACADEMY-EASTWOOD Q.C.** is applying for registration with the Board of Investments (BOI) as **New ICT Service Firm in the field of Educational/ Training Institution for Medical Transcriptionist** on a **Non-Pioneer Status** with project/plant site located at **Unit 203 Intrepid Plaza, E. Rodriguez Jr. Avenue, Barangay Bagumbayan, Quezon City.**

Any person with valid objection/s on the above-mentioned project may file his/her objection in writing, under oath, with the BOI within three (3) days from the date of this publication.

(Sgd.) RUDY B. CAÑA
Director
Project Evaluation and Registration
Department

(PDI–July 20, 2006)

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PERSONAL

Holy Spirit Thou who make me see everything and show me the way to reach my ideal. You who give me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and who are in all instances of my life with me, I in this short dialogue want to thank You for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from You no matter how great the material desires may be. I want to be with and my loved ones in Your perpetual glory Amen. Person must pray this 3 consecutive days, without stating one's wish. After 3rd day your wish will be granted no matter how difficult it may be. Promise to Publish this as soon as your favor has been granted. MA. NELLY

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BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE-INFRASTRUCTURE
Cebu Capitol, Cebu City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO RE-BID

The Province of Cebu, through its Bids and Awards Committee-Infrastructure (BAC-INFRA), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility, to re-bid for the hereunder contract:

Name of Contract	: **Repair / Improvement of Capitol Building**
Location	: Capitol Compound, Cebu City
Brief Description	:Repair and Improvement works for the Capitol Main Building
Approved Budget for the Contract	: P 5,957,874.45
Contract Duration	: 100 Calendar Days

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key personnel and equipment available for the prosecution of the contract. The BAC-INFRA will use non-discretionary pass / fail criteria in the Eligibility Check / Screening as well as in the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC-INFRA will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statements and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations-A (IRR-A).

The schedule of BAC-INFRA activities is as follows:

BAC-INFRA ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application for Eligibility	July 14 – 20, 2006
2. Issuance of Eligibility Forms	July 14 – 20, 2006
3. Receipt of Eligibility Requirements	July 20, 2006
4. Notice of Results of Eligibility Check	July 21, 2006
5. Issuance of Bidding Documents	July 21 - 24, 2006
6. Pre-bid Conference	July 26, 2006
7. Receipt and Opening of Bids	August 7, 2006

The BAC-INFRA Secretariat will issue to prospective bidder's Eligibility Forms at the Provincial Engineer's Office, Legislative Building, Capitol Compound, Cebu City, upon their submission of a Letter of Intent and upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Fifty Pesos (P 50.00) to the Cash Division, Provincial Treasurer's Office. Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to, and may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check from, the aforementioned address. For further inquiries, one may call the Secretariat at (032) 253-3105, (032) 255-6123.

The BAC-INFRA will issue Bidding Documents including Plans and Specifications, only to bidders declared by the BAC-INFRA. to be eligible for the bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Five Thousand Pesos (P 5,000.00) to the Cash Division, Provincial Treasurer's Office.

The Province of Cebu assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids and, reserves the right to reject any and all bids, waive any defect or informality in the bids, declare a failure of bidding or not to award the contract.

(Sgd.) EDUARDO T. HABIN
Chairman

(PDI – July 14 & 20, 2006)

HOME DEVELOPMENT MUTUAL FUND

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Pag-IBIG Fund, through its Bids and Awards Committee – Information Technology Resources (BAC-ITR), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project	: **Supply and Delivery of Seven Hundred Eighty Six (786) units PC Pentium IV**
Approved Budget For the Contract	: **Thirty Five Million Three Hundred Seventy Thousand Pesos (P35,370,000.00)**

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last five (5) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	July 20, 2006
2. Pre-bid Conference	August 4, 2006 2:00 p.m.
3. Opening of Bids	August 15, 2006 2:00 p.m.
4. Bid Evaluation	August 16-29, 2006
5. Post-qualification	August 30, 2006 to September 5, 2006
6. Notice of Award	September 13, 2006

Bid Documents may be obtained from the Procurement Section, General Services Department, Rm. 704, 7th Floor, Atrium of Makati Building, Makati Avenue, Makati City starting **July 19, 2006** upon payment of a non-refundable amount of **Eight Thousand Pesos (P8,000.00)**.

The Pag-IBIG Fund reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any informality or accept such bids as may be considered advantageous to the government. Further, the Fund assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for expenses or losses that may be incurred in participating in this bidding.

For further inquiries and/or information, please call Mssrs. Wilfrido Nacito S. Reyes and Jose Maria M. Diaz at 848-82-15, 811-42-62 or visit our Corporate Website at http://www.pagibigfund.gov.ph or e-mail us at hdmfgpis@info.com.ph

ATTY. OBERLIN L. PASTORES
Chair, BAC-ITR

(PDI–July 20 & 27, 2006)

PNOC ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, 1200 Taguig City, Philippines
P.O. Box 2102 MCPO. Tel. Nos. 893-6001 to 47/893-1320 Fax No. 840-1575

PNOC
The Energy Company

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

2006-2007 ANNUAL CONTRACT FOR VOYAGE CHARTER OF TRAMPING VESSELS (ON-CALL PRIORITY BASIS)
EDC 06-084

The Approved Budget is "on-call" priority basis chargeable against PNOC-EDC fund. The contract duration is **One (1) year.**

Application Forms for Eligibility and the Bidding Documents may be secured from the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group (c/o R.G. Bengaño) starting **July 20, 2006** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Pesos: Five Hundred (Php 500.00).

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **August 8, 2006, 10:00 a.m.** at 1st Floor Building 5, PNOC-EDC, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, Metro Manila.

Applications for Eligibility and sealed bids shall be received by the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group at PNOC-EDC, 1st Floor Bldg. 5, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, Metro Manila, **not later than 2:00 p.m. on August 22, 2006** and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to abort the bidding process, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC.

BAC CHAIRMAN

(PDI–July 20, 2006)

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES
1598 M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. J. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila
Tel. Nos. 522-0000; 526-0100 connecting all departments

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/ contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the projects as stated below:

Item / Description	Approved Budget	Date/Time		NON-REFUNDABLE FEE
		Pre-Bid Conference	Deadline/ Opening of Bids	
2 Units Sorter Machine (Desktop Type Machine) Plus: Three (3) Years Maintenance Services	P20,000,000.00 10,123,200.00	July 27, 2006 2:00 pm	August 9, 2006 1:00 PM	P15,100.00
1 Lot Supply, Delivery and Installation of Systems Furniture at LBP Cabanatuan Branch	P3,127,000.00	July 27, 2006 2:00 pm	August 9, 2006 1:00 PM	P1,600.00

The Bid Documents shall be available at the General Services Department starting July 13, 2006 upon payment of non-refundable fee indicated above.

The Pre-Bid Conference shall be held at GSD Bidding Room, 25th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza, 1598 M. H. del Pilar St., Malate, Manila.

The bidders shall drop their duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals in three separate sealed envelopes in the bid box located at the abovementioned address.

For more information, please call the LBP-Requisitions Management Division at telephone nos. 551-2200 locals 2452, 2453, 7233 & 7234.

LANDBANK reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder(s)

(PDI–July 13 & 20, 2006)

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

MANILA GAS CORPORATION (MGC)
INTER-ISLAND GAS SERVICES INC. (IIGSI)

INVITATION TO PUBLIC BIDDING

MGC/IIGSI offers for sale through sealed public bidding on August 09, 2006, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the NDC Audio Visual Room, Penthouse, NDC Building, 116 Tordesillas St., Salcedo Village, Makati City, the following real estate properties:

1. ***Paco North Property (MGC property)***
   The North Property is located at Sanciangco St., Paco, Manila and is composed of 3 contiguous lots:
   TCT-34304 - 2,608.20 sq.m.
   TCT-33924 - 2,231.40
   TCT-33924 - 7,431.20
   12,270.80 sq.m.
2. ***Cebu Property (IIGSI property)***
   The Cebu Property is located along the Barangay Road, Barangay Opao, Mandaue City and is composed of 2 ajoining lots:
   TCT-18998 - 2,128.00 sq.m.
   TCT-18999 - 9,529.00
   11,657.00 sq.m.

Due diligence period is from July 19 - August 04, 2006 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to be coordinated with the MGC/IIGSI Bids Committee. Interested parties may secure the Bidding Package starting July 19, 2006 from MGC c/o Mr. Efren Mancia, 7/F NDC Building, 116 Tordesillas St., Salcedo Village, Makati City. Tel. No. 8404838 loc. 223 & 313 / Fax No. 8404862 and IIGSI c/o Mr. Charlie Villegas, 3215 District 5 Sangi, Barangay Pajo, Lapu-Lapu City. Tel. No. 032-3418874. A pre-bidding conference is scheduled on July 27, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. at the NDC Audio Visual Room, Penthouse, NDC Building, 116 Tordesillas St., Salcedo Village, Makati City.

The sale of the above properties shall be strictly on **CASH**, on an **"AS-IS-WHERE-IS" BASIS.**

MGC/IIGSI reserves the right to reject any and all bids, or to waive any of the formalities required, or to accept only such bids or portion of bids which is deemed advantageous to MGC/IIGSI.

(PDI - July 19, 20 & 21, 2006)

NFA opens Tindahan Natin outlet in Quezon

LUCENA CITY – RESIDENTS of Padre Burgos, Quezon will now have easy access to low-priced, quality rice and noodles with the launching of a Tindahan Natin outlet in barangay Hinguiwin.

Gracing the affair was Presidential Management Staff assistant secretary and Tindahan Natin national coordinator Maria Lorelie Fajardo, representing the local government was municipal mayor Domingo Villena, Jr. of Padre Burgos with Sangguniang Bayan members.

The Tindahan Natin project aims to provide affordable but good quality rice and noodles through outlets identified and endorsed by the DSWD and accredited by the NFA. The program is in line with the national government's efforts in fighting hunger and unemployment.

The NFA regional office here has accredited 27 Tindahan Natin outlets, 15 of which are fully operational at present. These outlets sell NFA rice at P18 per kilogram, while noodles are sold cheaper than prevailing market prices.

For more information on Tindahan Natin program, the public may send their concerns via the Text NFA Program through mobile number 0917-6210927.

DBP
Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines will receive sealed bids on August 2, 2006, 2:00 p.m., 12th Floor, Suite 5, Executive Lounge of the DBP Head Office, Sen.Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City for the following properties on **CASH BASIS:**

CODE NO.	DESCRIPTION	AREA (sq.m.)	LOCATION	Minimum Bid
REAL ESTATE				
METRO MANILA				
AM-MC-133	House and lot (TCT N-234441)	403	No. 98, Road 7, Project 6, Quezon City	P 4,100,000.00
BENGUET				
AM-JA-134	126 individually titled subdivision lots (109 vacant lots, 4 with imp. & 13 road lots)	21,247	Sta. Elena Hills Subd. Ambiong, La Trinidad	P 12,009,100.00
LAGUNA				
AM-JA-135	Industrial lot (TCT No. T-231486) w/ bldg., facilities & machinery & equipment.	24,294	117 Progress Ave. corner Industry Drive, Carmelrayville Industrial Subd., Canlubang	P 135,635,120.00
QUEZON				
AM-CP-136	2-parcels of agro-residential lots (TCT Nos. T-20548 & 20549) with bldgs. & imp.	6,264	Bo. Comon, Infanta	P 3,147,500.00

BIDDERS ARE REMINDED:

1. To inspect the properties to determine their actual condition before the bidding;
2. To submit in DBP's official bid form available at the AMD-Acquired Assets, Ground Floor, DBP Head Office during office hours; and
3. To be on time. No bids will be accepted once unsealing of the bids commences. The sale shall be subject to other terms and conditions which may be imposed by the Bank.

DBP RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY THEREIN, OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS AS MAY BE CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE BANK. THE DECISION OF THE BANK IS FINAL AND BINDING.

For inquiries, please call telephone numbers: 892-1566/893-7172 or 818-9511 local 2158/2159 for Code starting with AM.

ASSET MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

(PDI – July 19 & 20, 2006)

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF THE STOCKHOLDERS OF PAMANTASAN NG ARAULLO (ARAULLO UNIVERSITY), INC.

Please be notified of the Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of the Pamantasan ng Araullo (Araullo University), Inc. to be held on **31 July 2006 at 2:00 p.m., Araullo University, Brgy. Bitas, Cabanatuan City**, with the following Agenda:

1. Call to Order
2. Notice and Quorum
3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting
4. Reading and Approval of Annual Report and Audited Financial Statements for Fiscal Year 2005-2006
5. Appointment of External Auditor
6. Ratification of all Acts of Directors and Officers
7. Election of Trustees
8. Other Matters
9. Adjournment

TROY A. LUNA
Corporate Secretary

(PDI–July 20, 2006)

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Gov't paid P391.7B worth of debts in H1

Six-month level is 24% higher than programmed, 37% more than year-ago's P286.42 billion

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT spent P391.7 billion for debt servicing in the first semester.

Data from the Department of Finance showed that the amount was 24-percent higher than the P316.44 billion programmed for loan payments during the six-month period. It was also about 37 percent higher than the P286.423 billion spent for debt servicing during the same period last year.

The higher-than-programmed debt servicing level was in line with the government's goal of slowing down the growth of the country's obligations and, eventually, start reducing it by 2009. Also, the government hopes to achieve a zero budget deficit in 2008.

National Treasurer Omar Cruz earlier said the government was keen on complying with the fiscal program of posting a balanced budget by 2008 and arresting the trend of a rising debt level by 2009. With a zero budget deficit, the government will no longer be forced to tap huge borrowings.

Of the amount spent for debt servicing from January to June this year, P235.140 billion went to payment of principal debts, while the remaining P156.562 billion covered interest charges on government loans.

The amount needed to pay the principal was not included in the government's annual budget because it was not coming from revenue collection but from new borrowings.

CRUZ

For years, payments for interests on loans accounted for about a third of the government's annual national budget. This was blamed for the insufficiency of funds for vital social services and infrastructure. But fiscal authorities said efforts to trim down government debts, while currently resulting in restrained spending, would make the government's budget more flexible in the medium- to long-term.

During the six-month period, some P305.98 billion in domestic obligations and P85.73 billion in foreign debts, including interest charges, were settled.

Fiscal authorities said it had been the policy of the government to obtain more of its funding requirements from domestic sources rather than foreign lenders to reduce the country's exposure to foreign exchange risks.

The government also said it intended to increase the share of official development assistance in the total amount of its foreign borrowings to take advantage of the ODAs' concessional interest rates. For this year, the government is programmed to borrow about $3 billion from commercial sources through sovereign bond float and some $900 million in ODAs.

Mideast dev't prompts RP to review inflation figures

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPinas (BSP) said it would review its inflation forecast for the year to take into account the impact of the volatile oil prices arising from the ongoing conflict in the Middle East.

BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo told reporters that Israel's air strikes in Lebanon has created uncertainty as to how much global oil prices would shoot up and how firms would respond in terms of stockpiling.

The BSP, whose primary tasks include ensuring price stability, earlier projected that inflation for the full year would settle between 7.3 and 7.9 percent.

Authorities were earlier actually mulling a cut in the inflation forecast, following the deceleration of price increases in the past months.

But conflict in the Middle East has prompted fiscal authorities to think twice about a cut. They are now actually considering a possible upward revision.

Guinigundo noted that the BSP's inflation forecast for this year took into account the assumption that Dubai crude, the benchmark used in setting domestic oil prices, would settle at an average of only $62 a barrel.

But he said that Dubai crude is now averaging between $62.5 and $63 a barrel, and is shooting at a high of $74 a barrel.

The Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC), the interagency body tasked with setting the government's economic programs and targets, is set to meet in the next few days to discuss possible revisions of the government's macroeconomic assumptions, specially inflation.

In the first six months of the year, inflation posted an average of 7.1 percent, lower than the BSP's forecast for the full year, and easing from the 8.3 percent recorded in the same six-month period last year.

The slowdown in the increase in consumer prices was attributed to the appreciation of the peso against the US dollar, which resulted in lower cost of imported goods.

But whether the deceleration would be sustained in the second half became doubtful because of the expected impact of high oil rates on prices of domestic goods.

Guinigundo said the conflict in the Middle East, which account for about a third of global oil supply, could also have adverse impact on the country's exports. *Michelle V. Remo*

Singapore firm to build water treatment facility

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE METROPOLITAN WATERworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) has commissioned Singaporean firm Salcon Pte. Ltd. to build a P630-million septage treatment plant to treat sewerage water from the east zone.

The plant will be one of three such facilities to be constructed simultaneously to answer the sewerage requirements of customers connected to the Manila Water Co. Inc., MWSS Administrator Orlando Hondrade yesterday said after the formal contract signing with Salcon.

Salcon is given 18 months to construct the facility that will have a capacity to daily treat 600 cubic meters of domestic sewage from some 37,000 septic tanks in the concession zone, Hondrade said.

"In less than two years, a septage treatment plant will rise in Pinugay, Antipolo, that will clean domestic sewage coming from septic tanks in Makati, Mandaluyong, Pateros, San Juan and Taguig," he added.

Funding for the construction of the septic plant was acquired from the Asian Development Bank.

"Cleaning the sewerage system in Metro Manila is part of a bigger vision to rehabilitate the Pasig River," Hondrade said. "This is the reason part of the proceeds of the loan received from the Asian Development Bank for the Pasig River Environmental management and Rehabilitation Sector Development Program will be applied to this project."

According to Manila Water Co. Inc. president Antonino T. Aquino, the facility would be one of three septage plants it would construct to serve its 6.5 million customers in the east zone. The World Bank, through the Land Bank of the Philippines, has funded the other two facilities now under construction.

The lack of underground sewer pipes, according to Aquino, prompted the company to build sewer plants and small package treatment plants.

"The process would involve the collection of sludge from household septic tanks and the corresponding treatment will be done in the facility," Aquino explained.

It is only in the east zone that corresponding sewerage projects are undertaken as additional investments for the company, Aquino said.

The company recovers these investments in the form of tariffs charged to customers.

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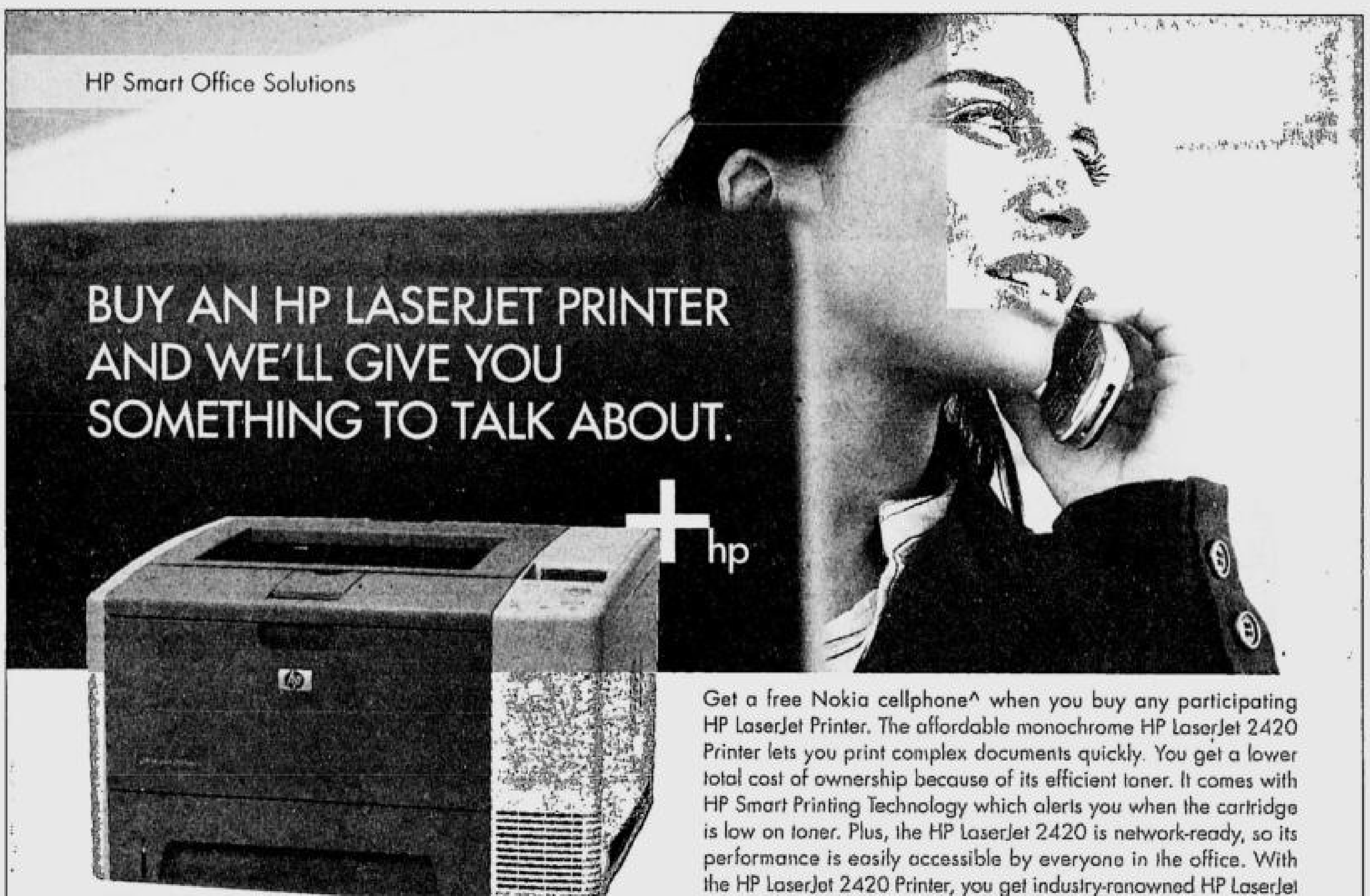
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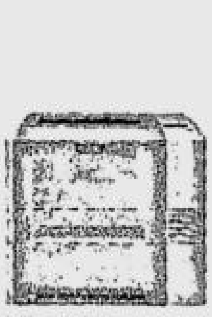

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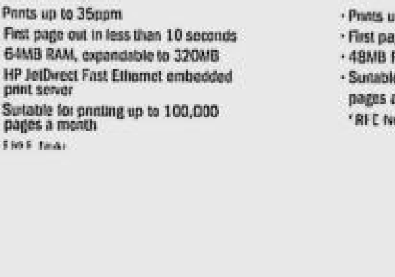

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1990, Series of 2006.

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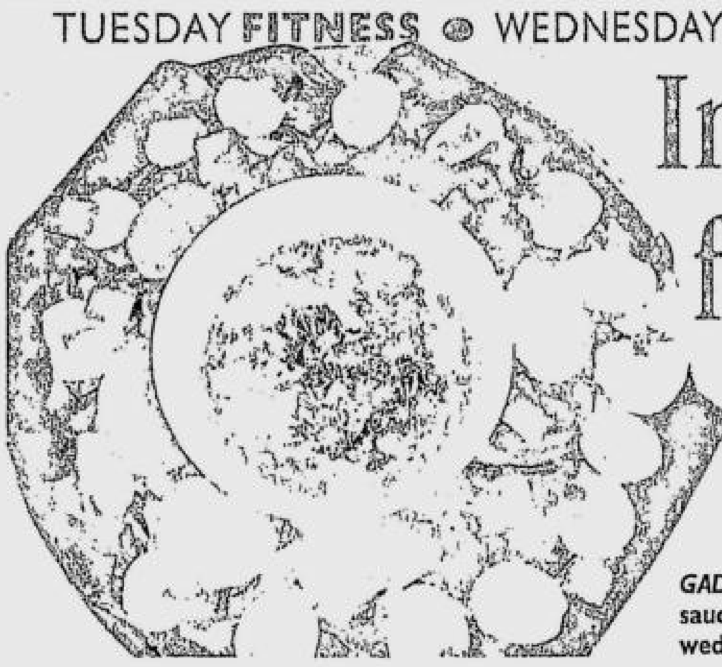
with onion soup /D2

LIFESTYLE

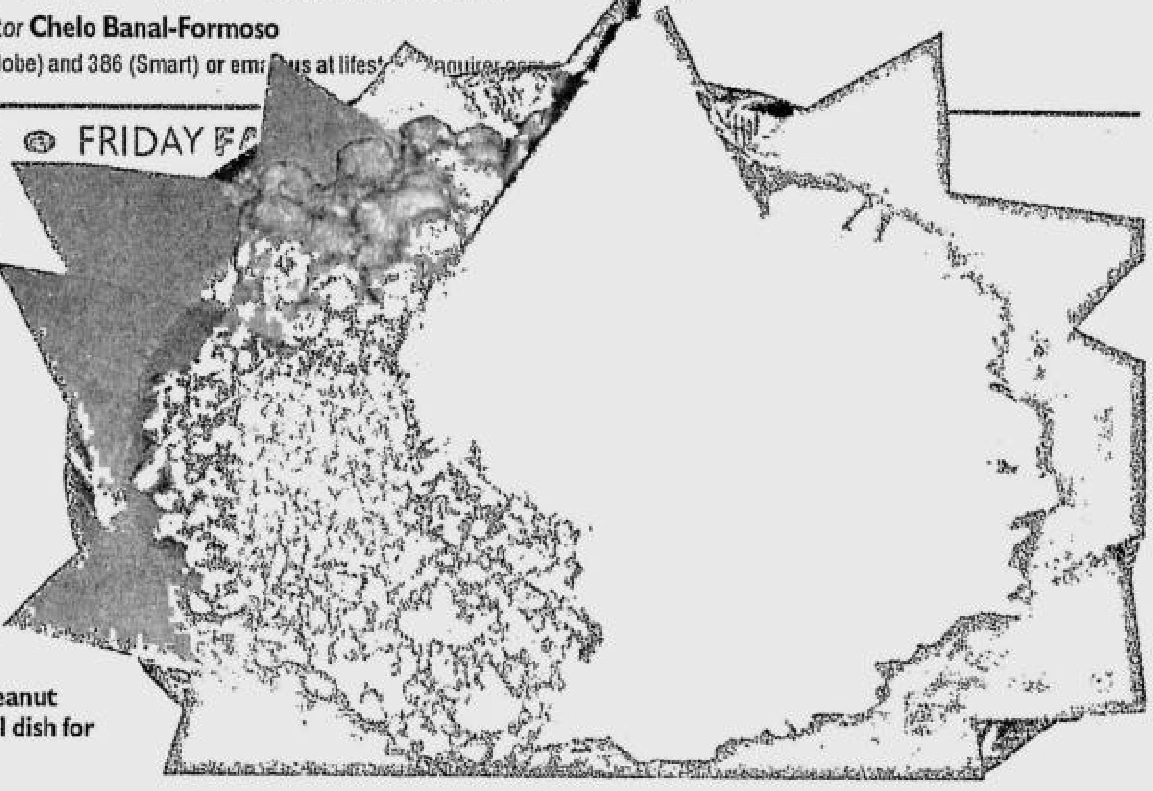
Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**
sms feedback: inquirer life name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 386 (Smart) or ema[illegible]us at lifes[illegible]inquirer[illegible]

TUESDAY **FITNESS** ◎ WEDNESDAY **2BU** ◎ THURSDAY **FOOD** ◎ FRIDAY F



Indonesian food blast

Restaurant 9501 holds a festival highlighting the cuisine of Indonesia



***GADO-GADO* (left) is steamed vegetables with peanut sauce. *Nasi tumpeng*, or yellow rice cone, a special dish for weddings and birthdays**

COUNTRY COOKING

Micky Fenix

WHEN MONA BISHIER Valdes walked in and was introduced as the one who cooked the Indonesian food we were about to taste, the first thing that came to mind was, "Don't trust a thin chef." She laughed when she was told she was too thin to be a chef. She had to work at her figure, she said, biking about 60 kilometers a day as her exercise.

That didn't make us feel better because of the little exercise we do in comparison. But when the food came in, laid out on the low table, we didn't feel guilty about overeating either.

A yellow-coned rice sat in the middle of a round tray with a bird's eye chili on top simulating a fiery emission of a yellow volcano. All around it were fried chicken, quail eggs covered in brown batter, shredded omelet, spiced peanuts and sweetened *dilis* (anchovy) and the *sambal goreng*, the relish that is so much a part of Indonesian cooking.

Nasi tumpeng is how the coned yellow rice is called. Mona said it's a thanksgiving meal for birthdays or weddings. Cutting the top of the rice cone is like cutting the cake which she asked Myrna Segismundo to do, our host that day at Restaurant 9501 of ABS-CBN.

Mona was giving a sample of what she would be serving for an Indonesian Food Festival at the restaurant during the last week of July. For the first time, Restaurant 9501, a private executive dining area, will be open to the public (see below for reservation information.)

The bit of personal history said Mona is Indonesian, married to Filipino finance executive Robin Valdes, and a mother to four boys. A later conversation provided more: She has a bit of Arab lineage, she is a medical doctor and she loves living in her adopted country.

Secret is in the sauce

I'm not too familiar with the food of Indonesia, save for the *gado-gado* and the *sate ayam* that we were served that day.

I had tasted the steamed mixed-vegetable dish, *gado-gado*, before, but it never made an impression. It's always the sauce that makes the difference, and the peanut sauce that day was so good I had to keep myself from eating too much as there were so many other dishes to try.

The *sate ayam*, or skewered chicken, also has a peanut sauce. I did notice it wasn't as hot as I thought it should have been. Mona said she had toned down the hotness in her cooking, especially when catering to Filipinos who generally couldn't take too much chili. Yes, she caters for

INDONESIAN/C2

MONA Bishier Valdes demonstrates how to serve the *opor ayam*.

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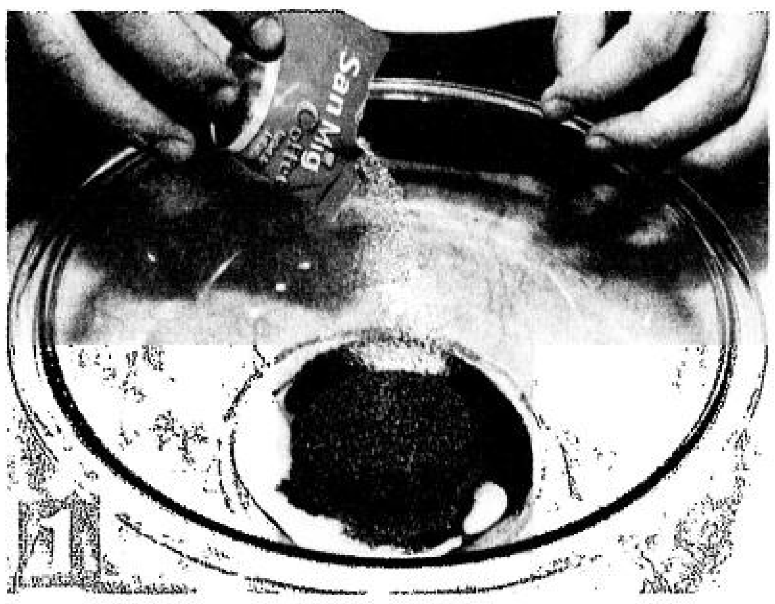
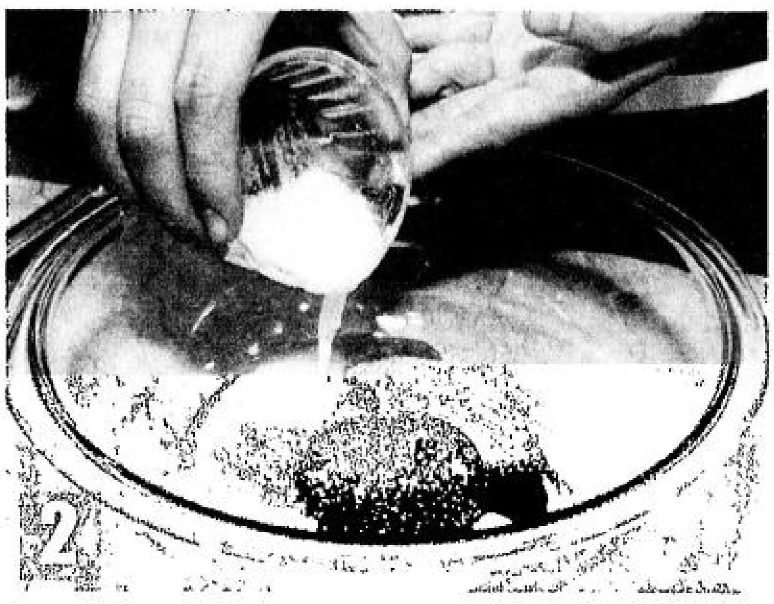
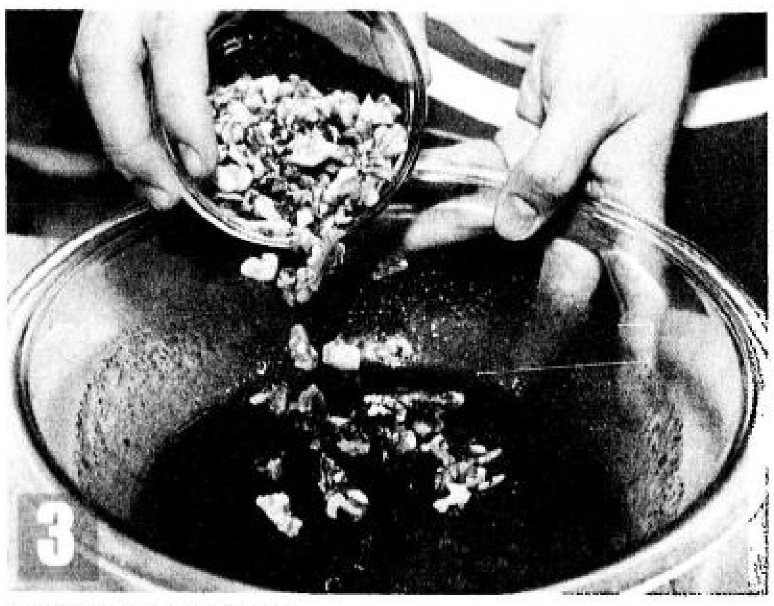


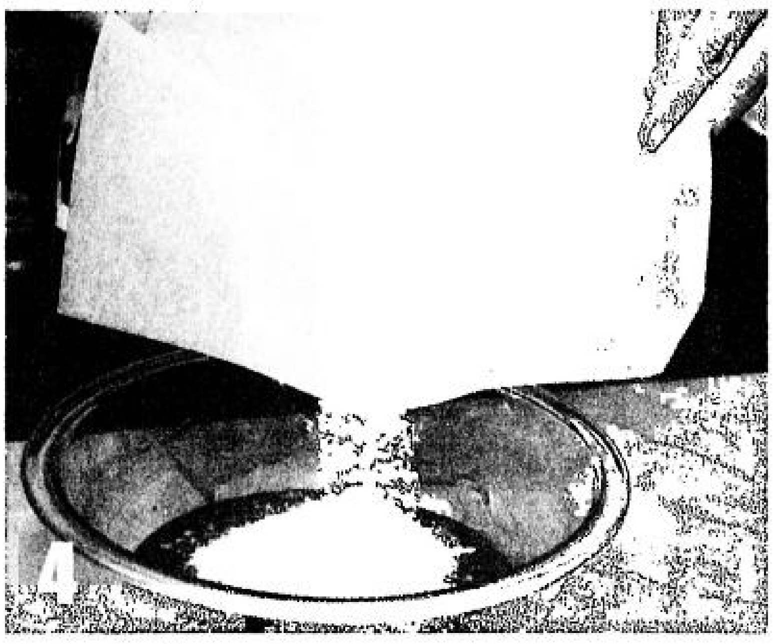
PREHEAT oven to 325°F. Combine and sift together the flour and baking powder. Set aside. In another mixing bowl, combine egg, brown sugar and coffee powder.



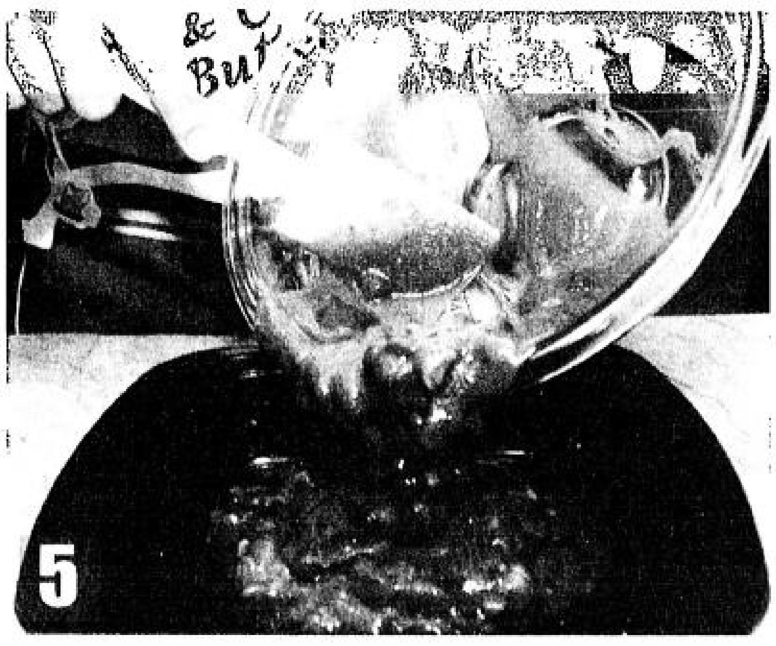
ADD melted butter and corn syrup. Mix until dissolved.



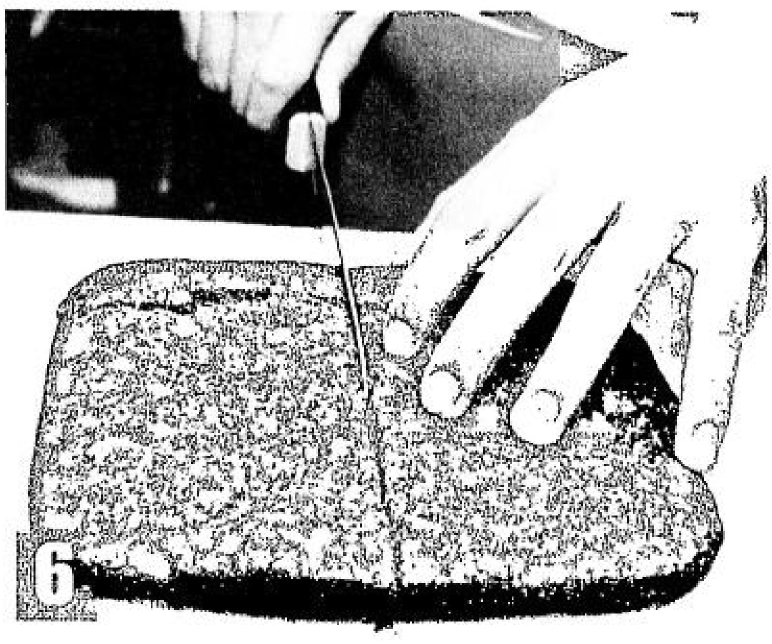
ADD choco chips and nuts.



FOLD in sifted dry ingredients.



POUR mixture into prepared eight-inch square Glad Ovenware. Bake for 20-25 minutes or until done. Cool.



CUT INTO bars and sprinkle with powdered sugar.

Crunchy, gooey, sweet coffee fix

Text by Vangie Baga-Reyes
Photos by Ryan Lim

CRAVING FOR SOMETHING SWEET with a strong flavor? Then satisfy your craving with these rich, gooey toffee bars.

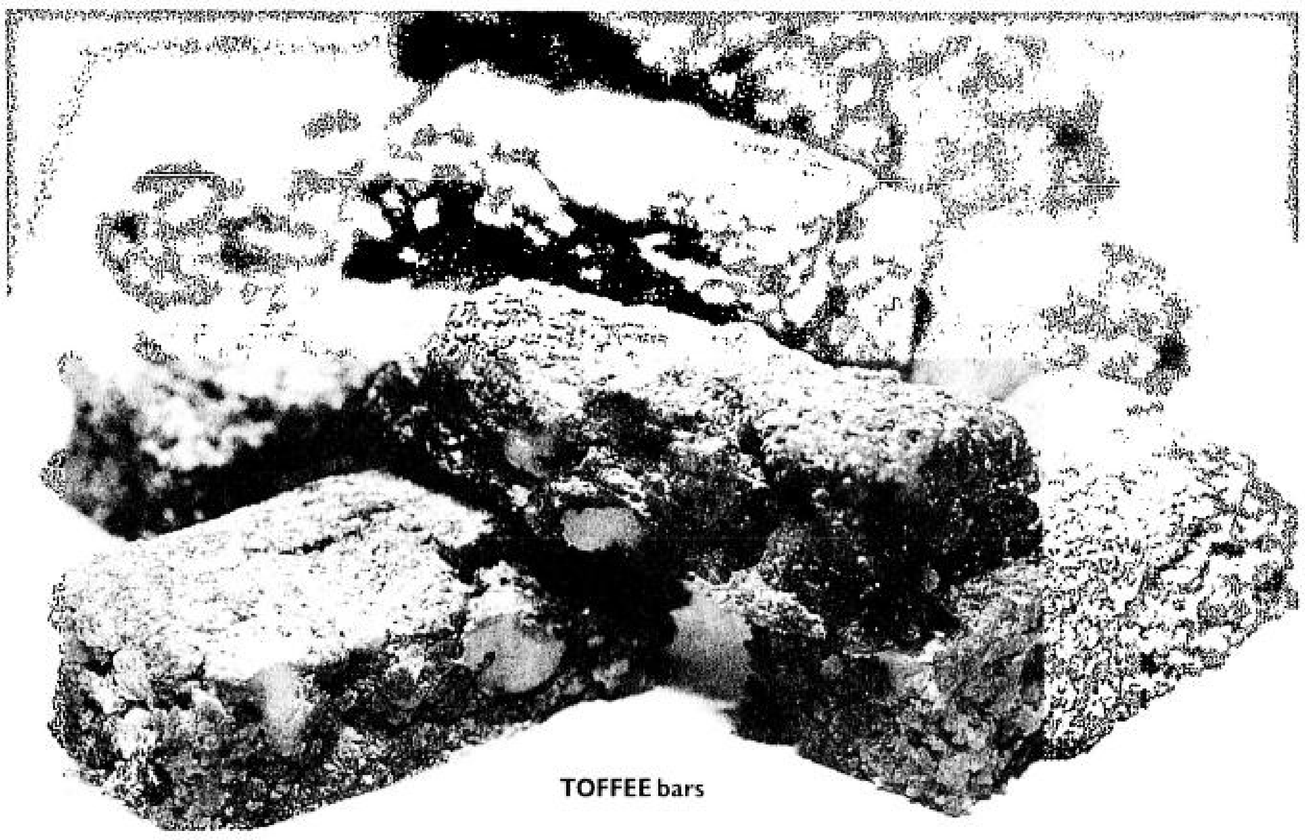
STEP BY STEP

Especially if you like coffee, you will definitely love these toffee bars. Though they may not look pretty, with their jagged edges, they are rich and buttery and satisfying, filled with coffee flavor while also packed with chopped nuts and chocolate chips.

Toffee Bars are perfect with a good cup of coffee or tea but may also be enjoyed as a snack anytime of the day or as sweet ending to a meal.

And toffee bars are not as complicated to make as some cookies. Just follow carefully the short and simple procedure carefully and you can enjoy this sweet delight.

Chef Sonny Ong of San Miguel PureFoods Culinary Center demonstrates the basic procedure, using instant coffee and corn syrup for this recipe.



TOFFEE bars

"You just combine all the ingredients, mix well, then bake, cool and serve on a nice platter. Even kids can do this, of course, with adult supervision," he says.

Ong puts the batter in a Glad Ovenware for quick baking time. But you can also use a regular 8" x 8" square pan lined with Glad bake paper.

Aside from walnuts, you can mix *pili*, almond, cashew or macadamia nuts into the batter for added crunch.

You may sprinkle powdered sugar over the bars before serving for that sophisticated look.

For suggestions, e-mail the author at vbaga@inquirer.com.ph

Ingredients

½ c Purefoods Baron All-Purpose Flour
½ tsp Bake Best Baking powder
1 egg
½ c brown sugar
1 tbsp coffee powder
¼ c + 2 tbsp Magnolia Gold butter, melted
¼ c corn syrup
½ c chocolate chips
½ c walnuts, coarsely chopped
8" x 8" Glad Ovenware

Indonesian food blast

From page C1

friends and their friends.

There were two soups, quite appropriate for that stormy day.

Soto sapi is a beef soup with *sotanghon* and bean sprouts. Now the last two ingredients do go together in one of our own dishes, *sotanghon* with shrimp and beans sprouts. But the *soto sapi* has so much more—boiled eggs, green onion, ox tripe, lime, sliced tomato and fried crisp onion.

It is *opor ayam*, a kind of chicken soup, that is considered the Indonesian special dish served after the Ramadan, or the feast called Lebaran. Mona knelt beside the dish to show just how this is served. She assembled the four components for me, which eventually I did for most of the people beside me.

The four parts of the *opor ayam* include: rice cakes called *lontong*, cooked the way we do *suman*, cut in cylinders; chicken soup flavored with coconut milk, lemoNgrass, the aromatic *salam* leaves and three kinds of ginger, including turmeric and *galangal* or *langkawas*; the two *sambals* or spicy condiments, one of them *sayote* and the other one, green chili and *tausi* (fermented black beans).

Far from bland

By then we were agreeing with Mona that Indonesian food was far from bland. And the next dishes more than proved that.

Whenever a spice mix is made, it's a test of how good the cook is. Mona must have been a good student of her grandmother because we had a memorable duck with a *sambal* mix that she called Bali duck but which she said wasn't really Bali in flavors but more Javanese, the region where she is from. She had lamb curry, again simmered with spices. Her beef *rendang* was cooked in coconut milk with a complex list of flavors from the three gingers plus coriander, cumin, lemongrass, tamarind and chili. And then her invention, a recipe of the Valdes household, which is a curry for the overflow of seafood bought during Sundays, very lightly done but terrific for the subtle flavors.

INDONESIAN ambiance created with batik, Wayang puppets and *kalachuchi* flowers.

The festival will be called "Makan Makan," their word for eating. Mona said she thought "Mangan" would also be good. She knew that was Kapampangan for eating as well, just like *nasi* is for rice.

Atjara is another dish that sounds familiar and it also means a relish, just like our *achara*. For the *martabak*, the Indonesian *lumpia* of ground beef, eggs and leeks, the *atjar* was cucumber and onions mixed in with vinegar, sugar and salt.

The *sup buntot* is easy to discern as soup made of ox tail but you'd have to read the translation of *pisang goring kipas* to conclude that it was our *maruya* fan-*shaped banana fritters.*

Two desserts ended our Indonesian meal. *Enten-enten* is crepe filled with grated young coconut and cooked in *panutsa*, the end result being our *bocayo*, then drizzled with coconut cream. *Es teller* is the Indonesian *halo-halo* using the necessary fresh fruits of avocado, jackfruit and *buko* meat, served with crushed ice, drizzled with condensed milk mixed with coconut cream and then made aromatic with a drop of rose syrup.

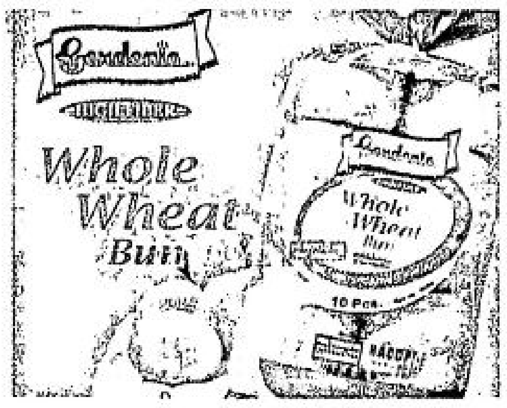
That day we had a feast for our senses. Our palates were overwhelmed by so many flavors. Our noses experienced the sweet smell of the rose syrup and the complexity of the curries. There was certainly for our eyes the wonderful table setting that included batik, the Wayang puppets and the *kalachuchi* flowers, as well as in the presentation of dishes, even in those dominated by the color brown.

***Opor ayam* is chicken soup with accompanying *lontong* and two *sambals*.**

After that cooking of Mona Bishier Valdes, it might be good to rework that adage about not trusting a thin chef.

Makan Makan, Indonesian Food Festival at the Restaurant 9501, 14/F, ELJ Coomunications Center, ABS-CBN. July 24-28, lunch only. For reservations, call 4111564 or 4111434.

E-mail the author at pinoyfood04@yahoo.com



Hotdog, cheese and bread for filling 'baon'

FOR A FILLING *BAON* FOR school-age kids, Gardenia shares this recipe that the rest of the family may also enjoy.

10 pcs Gardenia Pandesal, halved
7 pcs hotdog
2 tbsp cooking oil
1 tbsp garlic, minced
150 g Mozzarella cheese (can also use easy-to-melt cheese)

Sauté garlic in oil. Add hotdog slices. Stir-fry for a few minutes.

Put a spoonful of sliced hotdogs on top of each slice of Gardenia Pandesal. Top with cheese.

Place in oven toaster. Heat for three to five minutes or until cheese has melted.

Makes 20 servings.

Cooking classes

REGGIE ASPIRAS cooking school offers new courses:

July 21—Extra Ordinary Spanish Dishes (all new!)—Some of My Best Spanish Recipes: Leon-Style Cocido with Jamon Serrano Dumplings and Pasta, Bacalao Al Pil-pil in White Garlic Sauce, Pollo al Ajillo con Azafran (Chicken with Safron), Arroz y Gambas Al Ajillo (Rice Cooked in Shrimp and Garlic Sauce), Melocoton con Merengue (Meringue Filled Peaches)

July 22—Home-cured Breakfast Corned Beef and Bacon (all new!). Learn the art of curing two of your breakfast favorites. All can take home their own slab.

July 24—Asian Breakfasts '06 (all new!)—Kaya Jam on Toast, Radish and Chinese Sausage Cake, Oyster Congee, Mee Goreng (Stir Fried Noodle), Egg Custard, Kopi with Condensed Milk

July 26—Luscious Foie Gras (all new!)

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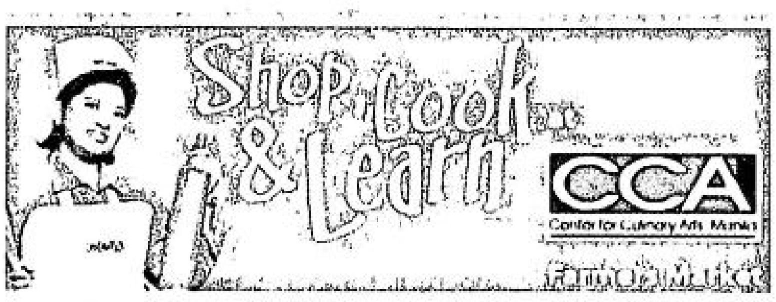

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"Chicken!" (Poultry 101) July 30 *

"Extra Soup Po" (Bisques, Chowders, Cream, Puree, and Potage) July 30

"Fish Tayo!" (Cooking with Fish) July 31 *

"Goodbye Deliveries!" (Pizza Making) July 31

"Great Wall of Farmers Market" (Chinese Cuisine) August 1 *

"Gutomako!" (Sushi Making) August 1 *

"Hamon ng Kampeon" (Ham Making) August 2 *

"Hoy Gising!" (Brunch and Breakfast Cookery) August 2 *

"Humpty Dumpty" (Table Eggs for Breakfast and Brunch) August 3

"I Feel Desserted..." (Quick and Easy Desserts) August 3

"Jewel in the Kitchen" (Korean Cuisine) August 4

"Kiding Aside" (Healthy Snacks for Kids) August 4

"Pinoy Ako Dessert Edition" (Filipino Desserts and Treats) July 21

"Quest for the Holy Grill" (Grilled Poultry, Beef, Pork, and Seafoods) July 21 *

"Soy Bellssima!" (Paella and Risottos) July 22 *

"SurpRice!" (Different Ways of Rice Cookery) July 22, *

"Temptation Island" (Various Chocolate Treats) July 23,

"The Coconut Nut" (Cooking With Coconut) July 23 *

"Top of the World" (Stir-Fried Combos with Rice Toppings) July 24 *

"Vietnam Rolls" (Vietnamese Cuisine) July 24 *

"Which Sandwich?" (Different Ways of Preparing Sandwiches) July 25

"Who Stole the Cookie From the Cookie Jar?" (Bars, Cookies, and Fabulous Munchies). July 25

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New snack with dip

SAN MIGUEL CORP. makes its first foray into the snacks market with the new E-Aji Dip Snax, the snack with dip.

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August 1(Tuesday)9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m (classroom A) BASIC CAKES & ICINGS FOR BEGINNERS by: Heny Sison* Butter Cake with Butter Icing, Moist Chocolate Cake with Fudge Icing, Mocha Cake with No-Melt Butter Icing, Lemon Chiffon Cake with Boiled Icing & Sponge Cake with Whipped Cream Icing P1,500

August 1(Tuesday)2:00 – 5:00 p.m (classroom A) BROWNIES & BARS by: Heny Sison* Chewy Moist Brownies, Carrot Cake Bars with Cream Cheese Icing, Lemon Cheesecake Bars, Brownies with Caramel Center & Butterscotch Bars. P1,500

August 1(Tuesday)9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon(classroom B) NEW CLASS! HEALTHY GOURMET COOKING: SPA COOKING by: Jacqueline H. Alleje owner of Rizal Dairy Farm, Swiss-Pinoy restaurateur (Vieux Chalet Swiss restaurant), organic caterer and food consultant (Petra's naturally green, global, gourmet)Techniques of lean cuisine, SPA cooking. Flavors, not calories are the prime ingredients. Learn how to include healthy dishes in your menu planning to satisfy your personal needs and/or new trends in the restaurant industry. This class is suitable for people who wants to learn more about healthy cooking as well as for restaurant and coffee shop owners. Drinks: Vegetable Juice, Smoothies and home made Ice Teas, appetizers and light bites, Vegetable stock based soups, easy to cook grilled and steamed main courses, light desserts P1,400

August 1(Tuesday)1:00 – 4:00 p.m (classroom B) NEW CLASS! HEALTHY GOURMET: BAKED GOODIES SWEETENED WITH HONEY, MUSCOVADO AND SPLENDA by: Jacqueline H. Alleje* Cookies, muffins and tea breads free of refined white sugar, but of wholesome ingredients as healthy treats and snacks for you family, or for your business venture. Recipes: Mango Oaties, Passionfruit Drops, Cinnamon Tropical Fruit Muffins, Whole Raisin Muffin, Orange Walnut Tea Bread, Cardamom Short Breads. P1,500

August 2(Wednesday)9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m (classroom A) PARADE OF PIES, TARTS & CHEESECAKES by: Heny Sison* French Apple Pie with Streusel Topping and Creme Anglaise Sauce, Turtle Pie, Banana Cream Pie with Whipped Cream and Caramel Topping, Mango Tart, Peach Walnut Pie, Blueberry Cheesecake and White Chocolate Cheesecake P1,700

August 2(Wednesday)10:00 a.m – 4:00 p.m (classroom B) TAPAS I by: Chef Ed Quimson, is a seasoned master chef of Spanish origin, creator of Chef Ed's Restaurant at Salcedo Village, Makati City and his latest restaurant FILOS at The Fort, Makati City. Recipes: Croquettas: Chicken, Tuna & Cheese, Croquettas de Paella Negra, Potato & Anchovy, Gambas, Tortilla de Patata, Samosa Tinapa filled w/ Green Mango & Cheese, Pimientos Alinadas (toasted red bell pepper marinated in olive oil & garlic), Salpicao, Batido de Salmon (whipped cheese & salmon mousse). Full Participation. P2,500

August 3(Thursday)10:00 – 4:00 p.m (classroom A) COFFEE CLASS by: Chef Aileen Anastacio-Sandoval, owner of Goodies N' Sweet Bakeshop & C'est Si Bon, Dean's list graduate of Culinary at the California Culinary Academy* If you are planning to open a coffee shop this course is for you. Learn the four fundamentals of coffee brewing, home espresso, guide to steaming & foaming. Make fun toppings & garnishes & master the art of coffee making. Recipes: Caffe Latte, Caffe Mocha, Caffe Americano, Cappuccino, Espresso Macchiato & Espresso Con Panna, Almond Coffee Freeze, Icy Rum Coffee Cream, Toffee Coffee, Mudslide Malt, Mocha Rumba, Rocky Road and more! P3,000

August 4(Friday)9:30 a.m. -1:00 p.m (classroom A) NEW CLASS! FILIPINO PAMBAHAY SERIES 1 by: Chef Katherine Sion, restaurateur (Ding Hao & Fat Kat restaurant) caterer and an expert in Chinese cuisine.* Sinigang na Baboy, Boneless Bangus, Chicken Apritada, Kilawin na Labanos, Ginataang Hipon, Adobong Pata. P1,500

August 4(Friday)1:30 – 5:00 p.m (classroom A) NEW CLASS! FILIPINO PAMBAHAY SERIES 2 by: Chef Katherine Sion* Pancit Molo Soup, Beef Mechado, Relyenong Bangus, Chicken Bisaya, Kulao na Talong Lengua with Mushroom. P1,500

August 5(Saturday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m (classroom A) INTRODUCTION TO JAPANESE COOKING by: Chef Koichi Kondo, licensed cook from Ehime, Japan and food consultant to various Japanese restaurants * Learn all-time favorites Japanese dishes applicable to home & professional cooking such as: Sushi, Sashimi, Sukiyaki, Miso Soup, Tempura, Teriyaki, Udon Noodles in Clay Pot, Chicken Teriyaki & Japanese Fried Rice. P2,500

August 7(Monday)10:00 a.m – 4:00 p.m (classroom A) BASIC FLOWER ARRANGEMENTS by: Glenn Remorca, floral designer* Learn the theories, styles, trends, techniques, sourcing, flower care and maintenance, basic forms, arrangements and flowers for weddings. Lecture, demonstration and hands-on production. Bring a pair of scissors. P2,500

August 7(Monday)10:00 a.m – 4:00 p.m (classroom B) PHILIPPINE SWEETS & DELICACIES: QUEZON/LAGUNA by: Chef Carol Acosta, Food consultant to multi-national food companies & restaurants* Sinukmani, Kalamay Hati, Espasol w/ Pinipig & Young Coconut, Buko Pie, Pastillas Macapuno and Ube-Langka Pastillas P1,500

August 8 -9 (Tuesday - Wednesday)9:00 a.m – 4:00 p.m (classroom A) CAKE DECORATING COURSE I by: Heny Sison* Learn the basics of cake decorating: icing color, star, shell, dots, outline and scallop borders; the rose, figure piping: clowns & booties. Each student will bake & decorate a character birthday cake. Full participation. P4,000

August 9(Wednesday)9:00 a.m – 4:00 p.m (classroom B) NEW CLASS! BREAKFAST & BRUNCH COOKERY by: Chef Vivian Basco-Syyap, Private Chef/Caterer, Associates in Occupational Studies, Culinary Arts, with honors, The Culinary Institute of America, Hyde Park NY. Eggs: Boiled (coddled, soft-boiled, medium-boiled, hard-boiled), Baked, Fried (sunny-side up, over easy, over medium, over hard), Poached – basic and variation (*Poached Eggs Mornay, Poached Eggs Florentine, Poached Eggs Benedict*), Scrambled – basic and variation (*Scrambled Eggs Gratine, Scrambled Eggs Hunter style*), and Omelet – French style or rolled (*Cheese Omelet, Mushroom Omelet, Meat and Cheese Omelet,* Frittata/Tortilla or Flat *Farmer's style*, Souffleed Pncakes, Waffles & Crepes: Basic Pancake – variation *Banana Pancake, Chocolate Chip Pancake, Blueberry Pancake*, Basic Waffle, Basic Crepe, French Toast Quiche: Basic – Pastry Crust and Custard variation. *Bacon Quiche, Spinach Quiche, Salmon & Leek*. P1,500

August 10(Thursday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m (classroom A) NEW CLASS! COFFEE WITH TORANI by: Chef Aileen Anastacio-Sandoval Recipes: White Rabbit, Peppermint Pattie, Oreo Bailey's, Coco Mocha, Banana Toffee, Hot Apple Pie, Hawaiian Hula, Butter Ball, Strawberry Cheesecake, Mandarin Chocolate, Baby Ruth & White Mocha Macadamia. P1,700

August 11(Friday)10:00 a.m – 4:00 p.m (classroom A) TAPAS II by: Chef Ed QuimsonRecipes: Tigres (fried Stuffed Mussels), Arroz Abanda (Paella Rice served with Poached Seafood and Alioli Sauce), Pastel de Balut, Callos al Estilo, Natillas, Pescado al Penalti and Fabada Asturiana. Demonstration with student participation. P2,500

August 12(Saturday)9:00 a.m – 12:00 noon(classroom A) HEALTHY GOURMET - SOUTH BEACH DIET PHASE 1 by: Jacqueline H. Alleje* This class is suitable for all people who want to be able to cook healthy dishes, lose weight considerably and people with health concerns such as diabetes, high blood pressure and other dietary restrictions. The class will guide you through the principles of healthy nutrition, South Beach Diet phase 1 "Swiss Pinoy Style", which uses locally available ingredients. Complete menu plan and recipes for 14 days of Phase 1. P1,500 plus P700 recipe booklet for Phase 1

August 12(Saturday)1:00 – 4:00 p.m (classroom A) HEALTHY GOURMET – SOUTH BEACH DIET COMBO CLASS PHASE 2 and 3by: Jacqueline H. Alleje * This class is suitable for all people who want to learn how to cook healthy dishes, deepen their knowledge of nutrition and weight control, as well as people with health concerns, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and other dietary restrictions. This class teaches wholesome recipes which reintroduce carbohydrates with complete recipe booklets for phase 2 and 3 of the South Beach Diet. P1,500plus P700 per recipe booklet

August 14-15(Monday - Tuesday)9:00 a.m – 4:00 p.m.(classroom A) CAKE DECORATING COURSE II by: Heny Sison * Add amazing new skills to your cake decorating – the world of icing flowers, distinctive borders, flower spray & specialty flowers. As a final project you will decorate a basketweave cake filled with cascading flower. Full participation. P4,000

August 14(Monday)10:00 a.m – 4:00 p.m (classroom B) NEW CLASS! BULAKAN SWEETS FAVORITE KAKANIN by: Chef Carol Acosta, Food consultant to multinational food companies & restaurants*Ensaymada Malolos, Special Inipit, Yellow Puto, Pichi-Pichi, Kapit (Kalamay w/ Langka & Latik) and Special Macaroons. P1,500

August 15(Tuesday)9:00 a.m – 1:00 p.m (classroom B) BEST OF THE BEST V: CHOCOLATE BARS by: Chef Vicki Villanueva, from Stars & Bizu, let Chef Vicki share with you her wealth of knowledge and experience of patisseries and restaurant concepts, skills, techniques & operations.*Triple Chocolate Fudgy Brownies, Cappuccino Bars, Turtle Squares, Zebra Bars, Butterscotch Bars and Revel Bars. P 1,700

August 15(Tuesday)1:30 – 5:30 p.m (classroom B) BEST OF THE BEST VII: LOAF & CUPCAKES by: Chef Vicki Villanueva* Carrot Walnut Cake, Chocolate Financiers, Butter Cake, Devils Food Cake, Choco Banana Cake, Marble Pound Cake, Chocolate Frosting, Cream Choco, Vanilla Buttercream P1,700

August 16(Wednesday)9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m (classroom A) FOOD CART V -HOUSE OF PANDESAL by: Chef Vicki Villanueva Recipes: Baliwag Pandesal, My Moms Special Pandesal, Pandesal Putok, Egg Pandaesal, Whole Wheat Pandesal, Cheese Pandesal, Adobo Pandesal, Pizza Pandesal, Ham Cheese Panderam. Demonstration w/ student participation. P2,500

August 16(Wednesday)10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m (classroom B) PAELLA Y MAS (Paellas & More!) by: Chef Ed Quimson* Recipes: Paella Negra (w/ squid ink), Paella ala Montaña, Paella Catalan (sin Tropezone), Paella Sevillano (Vegetarian), Paella Con Sela y Mejillones, Ensalada Especial & Pescado ala Sal. Demonstration with student participation. P2.500

August 17(Thursday)9:30 a.m – 3:30 p.m (classroom A) NEW CLASS! ALL ABOUT BEEF by: Chef Vicki Villanueva A Hands-on class and lunch w/ Chef Vicki. This adventure with beef focuses on the fine points of buying, preparing, cooking and serving. Each student will butcher butterfly their own roulade. Make the most of your curing knowledge with new dishes for corned beef. Learn more tempting side dishes and savor my best and moist chocolate cake. Recipes: Corned Beef 3 versions – Cured, Nilaga, Sinigang, Salpicao w/ Garlic Rice, Fillet Mignon w/ mashed potatoes and creamed spinach, Crispy Tadyang w/ Caramelized shallots and gravy, Beef Roulade w/ Mushroom sauce and my best Moist Chocolate cake Reservation is Requested! P3,250

August 18(Friday)10:00 a.m. -4:00 p.m (classroom A) KOREAN COOKING I: A WORKSHOP by: Chef Cecile Park, owner of Silla Korean Restaurant & food consultant to various Korean restaurants in Metro Manila* Beef Bulgogi (Tenderloin & ordinary), Chicken Bulgogi, Pork Bulgogi, Chap Chae, Mi Yuk Guk (Soups: Seaweeds, Beef or Tahong), Bibimbap & Kalbi Jim P2,500

August 19(Saturday)10:00 a.m – 4:00 p.m (classroom A) NEW CLASS! BACKYARD GRILLING & BARBECUE WORKSHOP PART 2 by: Chef Sam De Leoz, Food Consultant, Stylist, Photographer, Caterer, Food demonstrator and Culinary Competition Events Consultant specializing in Basic & Classical Cookery, International & Asian Cuisine.(Limited to 18 students only) The Chefs shares with you in this full participation workshop a few of his signature Grilling and Barbecue all time favorites. Recipes: Charbroiled SAM'S Baby Back Ribs w/ Barbecue Sauce and Grilled Corn, Grilled Blue Marlin w/ Sauce Grenobloise, Grilled Tuna Belly in Kikkoman Cilantro Marinade w/ Tamarind-Miso Dip, B Grilled Squid w/ Hot Chili Soy Vinegar, Grilled Chicken Breasts w/ Green Pepper Corn Sauce, Grilled Prawns w/ Beurre Noissette and Charbroiled Alimango w/ Roasted Siling Panigang Vinegar-Bagoong Isda Dip P2,000

August 21(Monday)9:00 a.m -3:30 p.m (classroom A)NEW CLASS! HOUSE OF RELLENO by: Chef Vicki Villanueva. A Hands-on class and lunch w/ Chef Vicki. Rekindle your love affair w/ relleno. Only the finest and freshest ingredients will be made available to you as you prepare, debone, butcher your own chicken, squid, bangus, etc. Learn more secret cooking techniques and prepare sauces and condiments. Recipes: Rellenong Manok w/ Kamias sauce, Rellenong Bangus 2 versions – Sizzling Bangus and Daing style w/ soy vinaigrette, My best Embutido, Rellenong Pusit, Rellenong Talong w/ Tomato and Cheese sauce, Baked Stuffed Mussels w/ Coco Cream, Salad greens w/ Honeyed Pals Vinaigrette and Buko Pandan Trifle Reservation is Requested! P2,850

August 21(Monday)10:00 a.m -4:00 p.m.(classroom B) PANADERO PANADERIA 1 by: Nestor Magrimbao, Baker, Fema Corporation* Pacencia, Galletas, Otap, Biscocho, Mamon Tostado, Rosquillos. Demonstration w/ student participation. P1,500

August 22(Tuesday)9:30 a.m – 1:00 p.m (classroom A) NEW CLASS! FILIPINO PAMBAHAY SERIES 3 by: Chef Katherine Sion* Sinigang na Maya-Maya sa Miso, Ginataang Tilapia, Pina-upong Manok, Sisig, Tortang Hipon, Binagoong na Liempo. P1,500

August 22(Tuesday)1:30 – 5:00 p.m.(classroom A) NEW CLASS! FILIPINO PAMBAHAY SERIES 4 by: Chef Katherine Sion* Tagalog na Batchoy, Bicol Express Tagalog Style, Pinakbet, Menudo, Roast Chicken with Tanglad, Sizzling Beef Fillet. P1,500

August 22(Tuesday)10:00 a.m – 4:00 p.m (classroom B) JAPANESE COOKING I (All Time Favorite Japanese Recipes) by: Chef Koichi Kondo* Miso Soup, Tempura, Nimono, Yakimono, California Maki, Chilled Soba, Noodles with Nori, Skewered Dumplings with Brown Sauce. P1,700

August 23(Wednesday)10:00 a.m – 4:00 p.m (classroom A) BAKED PASTAS I by: Chef Aileen Anastacio Sandoval Recipes: Beef Lasagna, Vegetable Lasagna, Chicken Macaroni, Baked Spaghetti and Baked Seafood Pasta. P1,700

August 23(Wednesday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m (classroom B) NEW CLASS! NATIVE KAKANIN : REGIONAL SPECIALTY by: Chef Carol Acosta* Bibingka Mandaue, Suman Visaya, Torta Cebuana, Binaki & Kutsinta Tejada. P1,500

August 24(Thursday)9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m (classroom A) JAPANESE RICE TOPPING by: Chef Koichi KondoRecipes: Oyako-don (Chicken & Egg on Rice), Gyudon (Beef Bowl), Tendon (Tempura Bowl), Katsu-don (Pork Cutlet Bowl), Soboro-don (Minced Chicken & Egg Bowl), Ton Teriyaki-don (Chicken Teriyaki) P1,700

August 24(Thursday)1:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.(classroom A) SUSHI CLASS by: Chef Koichi Kondo* Temaki-Zushi (Do-It Yourself Sushi Rolls), Bara-Zushi (Scattered Sushi), Inari-Zushi (Sushi Pockets), Futo-Maki Zushi (Thick-Rolled Sushi), Teka-Maki (Hand-rolled Tuna Sushi), Kappa-Maki (Sea Cucumber Sushi) and California Maki. P1,700

August 25(Friday)10:00 a.m – 4:00 p.m (classroom A) ADVANCED KOREAN COOKING CLASS by: Chef Cecile Park *Kimchi (Baguio Pechay & Raddish), Haemul Pajeon (Seafood Pancake with Several Vegetable), Samgye Tang (Ginseng Whole Chicken, Glutinous Rice & Ginseng), Teige Calbi Chim (Spareribs Stew), Bulgogi Salad (Beef Tenderloin Barbecue with Vegetbales & Sauce), Tak Salad (Chicken Salad), Tak Dori Tang (Spicy Chicken Stew) and Chap Chae (Contemporary Restaurant Style) P2,500

August 26(Saturday)9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m (classroom A) NEW CLASS! RISOTTO WORKSHOP by: Chef Sam de Leoz* Learn to prepare the perfect Risotto and its numerous variants on a hands-on workshop. Recipe: Risotto Alla Milanese, Prawn Risotto w/ Porcini Mushroom, Risotto Provencal, Rosemary Lamb Risotto, Thai Smoked Coconut Risotto, Anchovy, Capsicum and Tomato Risotto, Chocolate Orange Risotto P2,500

August 28(Monday)10:00 a.m -4:00 p.m.(classroom A) SIOPAO & MAMI WORKSHOP by: Chef Katherine Sion * Chicken Bola-Bola, Asado Pao, Bola-bola Pao, Jumbo Siopao with Chinese Sausage, Chicken Asado Mami & Beef Mami P2,500

August 28(Monday)10:00 a.m – 4:00 p.m (classroom B) NEW CLASS! CHINESE DELI by: Nestor Magrimbao Recipes: Dice Hopia, Tikoy, Siopao Mongo, Buchi & Moon Cake. P1,500

August 29(Tuesday)10:00 a.m – 4:00 p.m (classroom A) NEW CLASS! BAKED PASTAS II by: Chef Aileen Anastacio-Sandoval* Spinach, Ricotta and Mushroom Canneloni, Meat Canneloni with 2 Cheese, Baked Ham, Brocolli and Cheese Fusili, Seafood Lasagne & Sundried Tomato and Eggplant Lasagne P1,700

August 29(Tuesday)9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.(classroom B)DIMSUM I by: Chef Katherine Sion * Congee, Siomai, Dumpling, Chicken Feet, Fried Shrimp Ball and Buchi P1,700

August 29(Tuesday)1:00 – 5:00 p.m.(classroom B) NEW CLASS! EASY FAST-FOOD RECIPES 3 by: Chef Katherine Sion* Lechon Macau, Meatballs w/ Sweet and Sour Sauce, Crabmeat Fuyong, Lomi Soup, Camaron Rebosado, Fried Rice w/ Assorted Meats. P2,000

August 30(Wednesday)10:00 a.m – 4:00 p.m (classroom A) NEW CLASS! GOOD MORNING BREAKFAST by: Chef Aileen Anastacio-Sandoval* Fluffy Blueberry Pancakes, Strawberry Stuffed French Toast, Egg Benedict, Belgian Waffles with Bananas & Chocolate Sauce, Mediterranean Omelet, Hot Chocolate and Cafe Au Lait P1,700

August 30(Wednesday)10:00 a.m – 4:00 p.m (classroom B) JAPANESE COOKING 3 by: Chef Koichi Kondo Recipes: Yakisoba, Yaki-Udon, Tamagoyaki, Saikoro Steak, Ebi-Fry, Koroke, Kani Salad & Coffee Jelly. P1,700

August 31(Thursday)10:00 a.m – 4:00 p.m (classroom B)MODERN ITALIAN PASTAS by: Chef Aileen Anastacio-Sandoval* Spaghetti Al Nero w/ Squid Ink Sauce, Pasta Alla Norma w/ Tomatoes, Eggplant Basil and Mozzarella, Linguini Al Gorgonzola, Pasta Alla Papalina w/ Ham, Peas and Egg Sauce, Spaghettini Con Bagnabrusca with Lemon Anchovy Sauce and Spaghetti Al Tonno w/ Tuna in Tomato Cream Sauce. P1,700

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'Baon' tips and recipes

MAYA, MAKERS OF PREMIUM hotcake mixes and cake mixes, wants to help make *baon* preparation easier for moms.

It offers the following tips and some easy-to-do recipes:

1. List down what *baon* you will prepare for the week. This will prevent rushing in the morning. Any special preparation can also be done ahead of time. A list will help avoid repetition and guide grocery purchases.
2. *Baon* should include at least three food groups: carbohydrates, proteins, and fruits and vegetables.
3. Food safety should be the number one priority. Foods that cannot stay fresh for long should be avoided.
4. An adequate amount of fresh water should be included.
5. Be creative! Use colors and designs that are appealing to children.
6. Prepare *baon* in realistic quantities or in amounts a child can easily finish.

Maya has come up with two *baon* recipes that are nutritious, easy-to-prepare and are likely to appeal to children. The Choco Pinwheel Cookies use Maya Chocolate Hotcake mix, while the Ham and Cheese Waffle uses Maya Original Hotcake Mix.

CHOCO Pinwheel Cookies and Ham and Cheese Waffle

Choco Pinwheel Cookies

1 250-g pack Maya Original Hotcake mix
1/3 c butter or shortening
3 tbsp water
1 250-g pack Maya Chocolate Hotcake mix
1/3 c butter or shortening
3 tbsp water

Combine Original Hotcake mix and butter in a bowl until mixture forms coarse crumbs. Add enough water to form dough into a ball. Set aside. Combine Chocolate Hotcake mix and butter in a bowl until mixture forms coarse crumbs. Add enough water to form a ball of dough. Set aside.

Roll out the white dough between two sheets of wax paper into a rectangle. Do the same for the chocolate dough. Chill both for 10 minutes.

Invert the white dough against the chocolate dough. Press them together with a rolling pin. Roll up the dough tightly in jelly roll fashion. Wrap in wax paper. Chill.

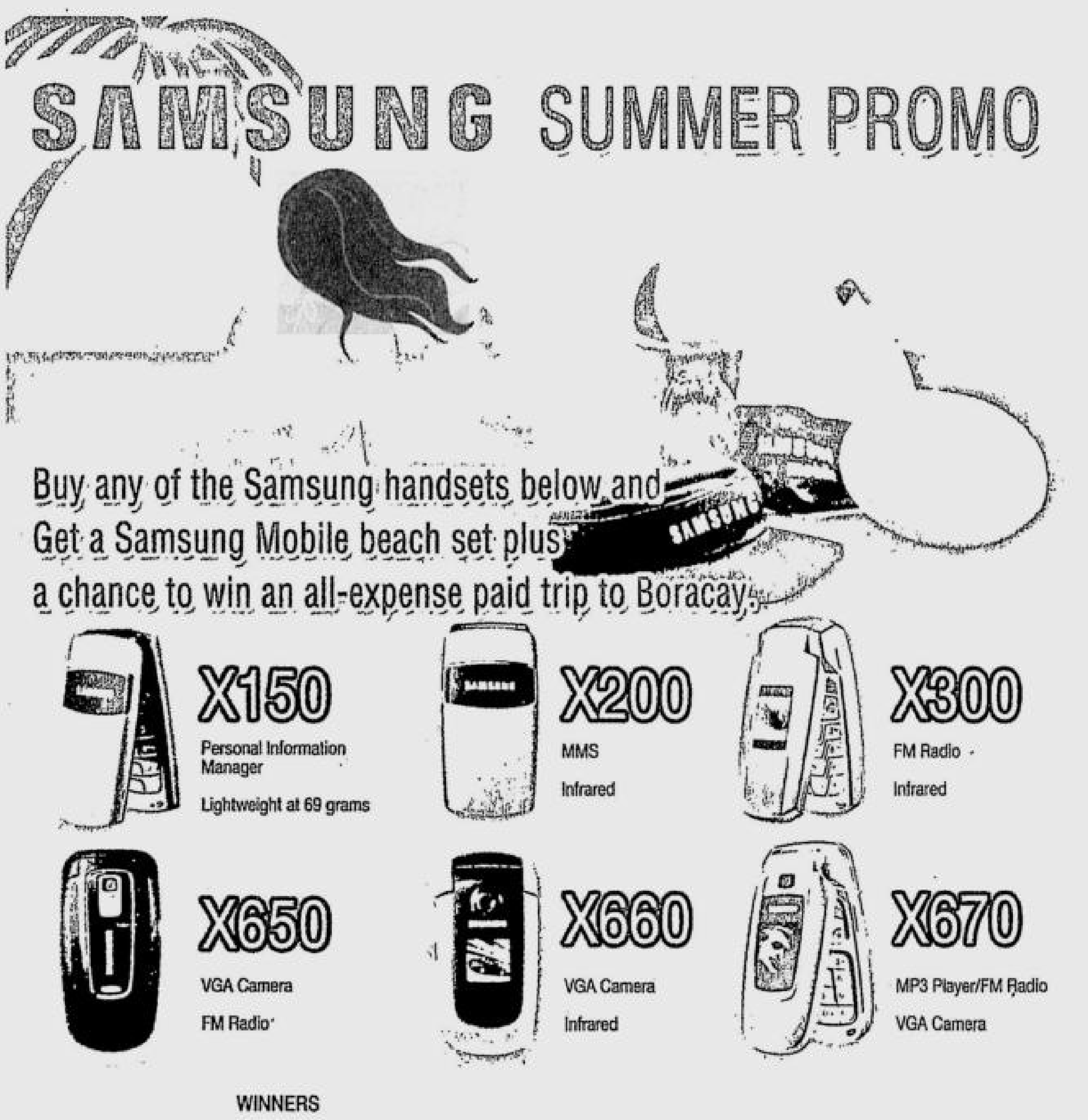
Slice into ¼-inch pieces and place on greased baking sheets. Bake in a preheated 350° F oven for 12-15 minutes or until edges are lightly browned.

Ham and Cheese Waffle

1 medium-size egg
2 tbsp oil
¾ c water
1 250-g package Maya Original Hotcake Mix
4 slices sweet ham
4 slices cheddar cheese
Mayonnaise
Salad tomato
Lettuce

Beat egg slightly in a bowl; add in oil, water and hotcake mix. Stir just until slightly lumpy. (Do not over-mix). Pour ¼ cup batter onto a pre-heated square waffle griddle. Cook until golden brown. Spread some mayonnaise on one side of the waffle, top with ham and cheese and garnish with lettuce and tomato. Cover with another piece of waffle. Cut into four and serve.

Recipes courtesy of the Maya Kitchen Culinary Arts Center, Liberty Commodities Corp. Call 8925011 local 108, or 8921185.



WINNERS

VELENDA EJENIAS
Unit 203 Bldg. P MRB Condo., Ususan, Taguig
0917-5142226

SHIRLEY PAGIUO
50 A. Bonifacio St., Sta. Lucia, Novaliches, Quezon City
0917-5087601

IAN EE
553 Pacencia Cruz St., Jenny's Maybunga, Pasig City
0920-5905107

Mechanics for Raffle:

1. Consumers also get a chance to win 1 of the 3 trips to Boracay for 2 for every purchase of X150, X200, X300, X650, X660 and X670, tax free. Prize trips are transferable but not convertible to cash. Trips are inclusive of airfare, hotel accommodations for 3 days and 2 nights and meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner for two).
2. Buyers have to register via online raffle at the Samsung Fun Club website (ph.samsungmobile.com) to qualify for the raffle. A participant can only win once.
3. Promo is valid at all First Asia Mobile dealers nationwide.
4. The promo is valid from May 25, 2006 – June 15, 2006.
5. Deadline for submission of entries is on June 15, 2006, 12 midnight.
6. The draw will be held in Samsung Electronics head office, Ground Floor Bonaventure Plaza, Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila on July 7, 2006 at 3:00 pm. Winners will be determined via computer generated draw.
7. All prizes are tax free.
8. Winners will be announced in broadsheet two weeks after the draw date and will be notified via registered and electronic mail. The trip is valid for 1 year upon issuance of ticket. Winners should present at least 2 valid IDs and the proof of purchase upon claiming the prize.
9. Prizes can be claimed at Samsung Electronics head office, Ground Floor Bonaventure Plaza, Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila during office hours from Monday to Friday, look for Mr. Nel Sicabalo. All items not claimed within 60 days from receipt of the registered mail will be forfeited. All prizes for provincial winners will be sent via mail.
10.. Employees of Samsung Electronics, Thumbs Advertising and all First Asia Mobile dealers including their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the promotion.

Per DTI NCR Permit # 3005 Series of 2006

Samsung Customer Contact Center: TOLL FREE 1-800-10SAMSUNG for PLDT or 1-800-3SAMSUNG for Digitel
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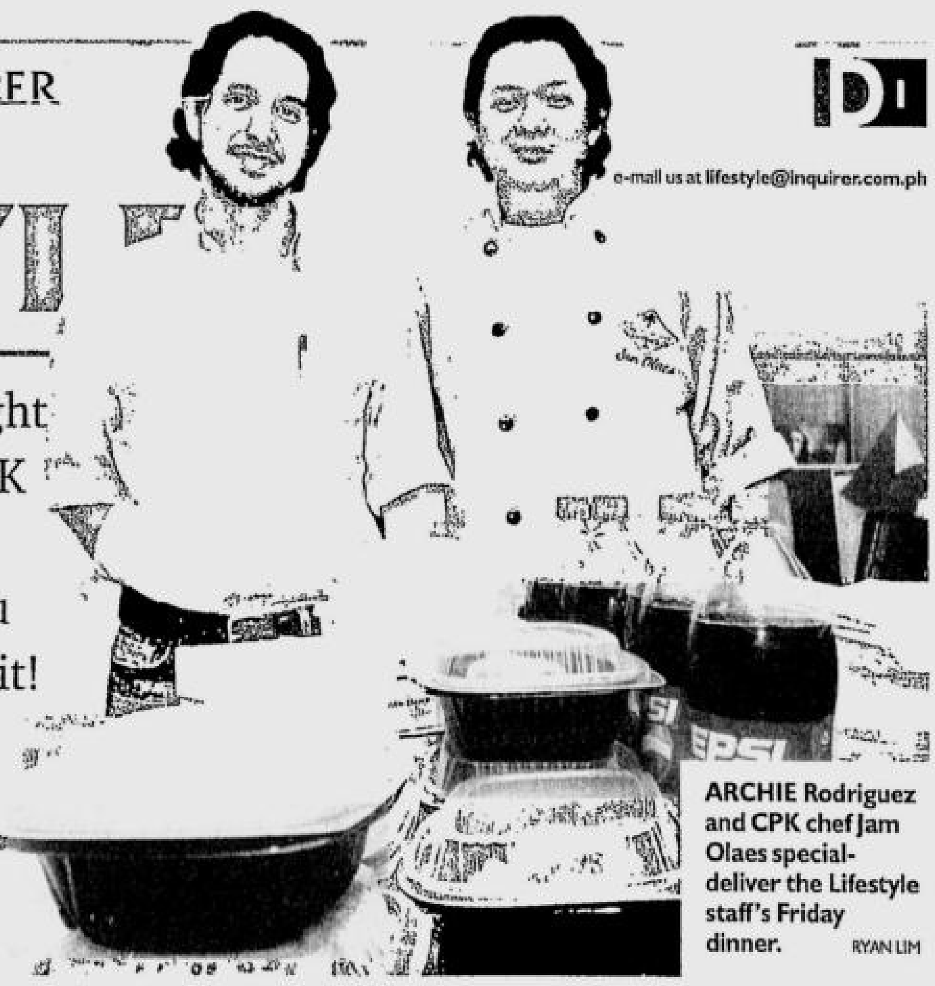
AVOCADO Club Egg Rolls

Guess who came with dinner

Has it been eight years since CPK first opened in Manila? You better believe it!



ARCHIE Rodriguez and CPK chef Jam Olaes special-deliver the Lifestyle staff's Friday dinner. RYAN LIM

ON A BUSY, BUSY Friday night, who would show up at Lifestyle's madhouse of an office but the gorgeous Archie Rodriguez himself!

Why does that name sound familiar? Well, Archie is president of Global Restaurant Concepts, which owns and manages the super popular restaurant California Pizza Kitchen, lovingly nicknamed CPK.

In time for cool (okay, wet) weather, CPK stirred up some new palate-teasers that include Chipotle Chicken Pizza, Milan Pizza, Szechuan Orange Chicken Lettuce Wraps, Thai Crunch Salad, Avocado Club Eggrolls and Shanghai Garlic Noodles.

And those were the very dishes that Archie and the CPK team had us sample to soothe our Friday deadline blues and frayed nerves and grumbling tummies.

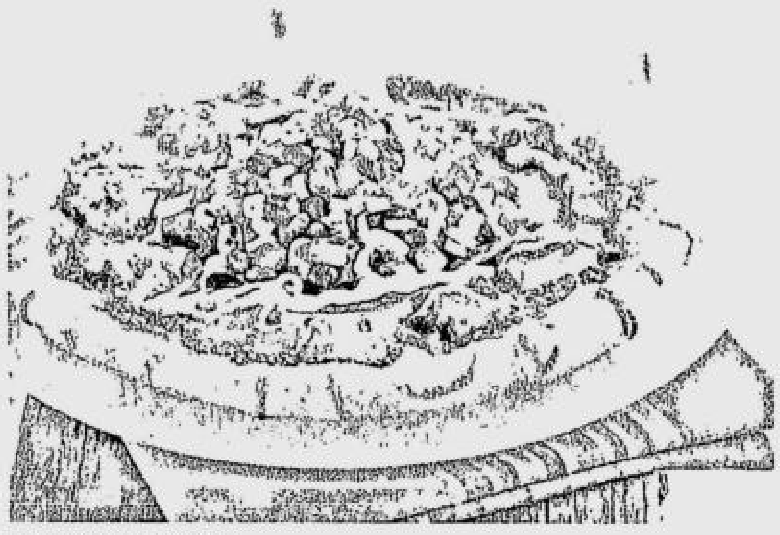
"We always try to introduce fresh and exciting dishes to thrill our customers' taste buds," said Archie, ever the entrepreneur. "We have a regular clientele and we make sure we offer a variety of dishes for their satisfaction."

He added that the greatest testament to the success of CPK, which turns eight next month, were the people who've kept coming back.

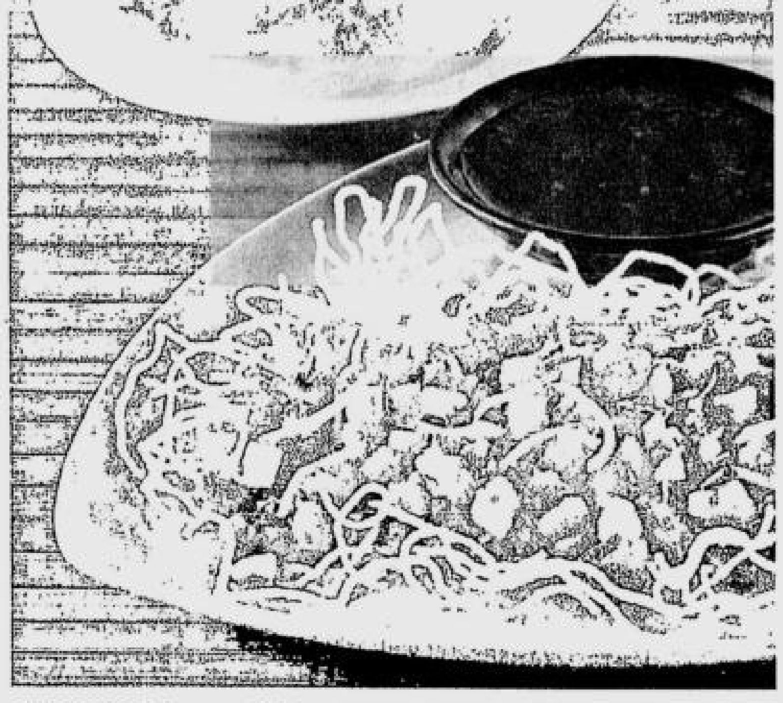
"We have the best service and our dishes maintain their consistency in quality and flavor. In CPK you know what you are going to get. Most of our raw ingredients are imported—from the cheese down to the dressing. We never substitute. But, we always strive to better our dishes and our service."

Our hands-down favorite? The lettuce wraps which, after CPK's tweaking, came out as Szechuan

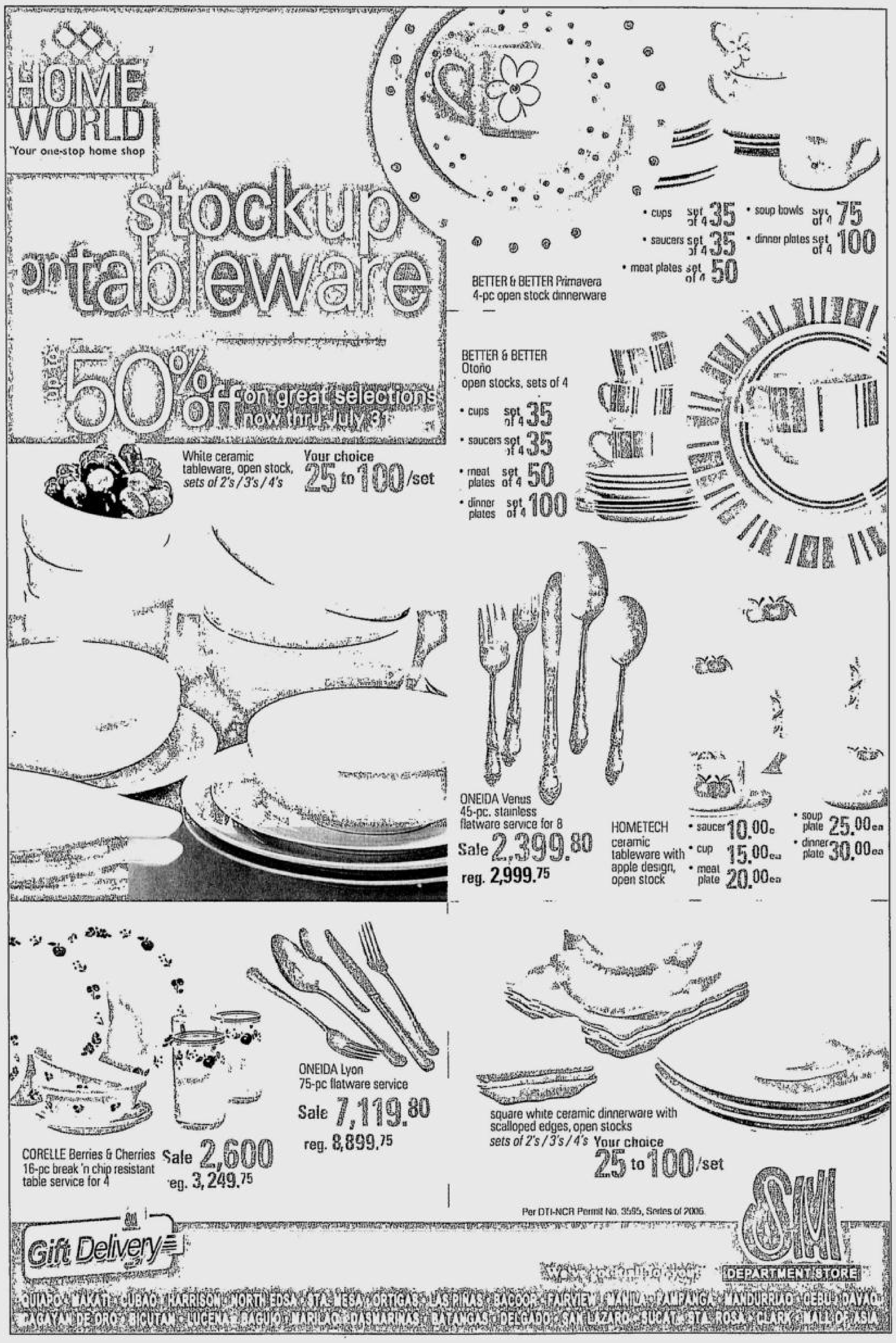
GUESS/ D3



CHIPOTLE Chicken



SZECHUAN Orange Chicken Lettuce Wraps



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Otoño
open stocks, sets of 4
• cups set of 4 35
• saucers set of 4 35
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White ceramic tableware, open stock,
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PER DOH-BFAD PERMIT # 0645 Series of 2006

Celebrating life with prime rib, friendship with onion soup

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

MEN OF PROMINENCE TURNING 60 this year: US Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, Brunei's Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah and my brother-in-law, Babes Oreta. Since I know none of the three, I can only speak of my brother-in-law and that is precisely why I included him in the list!

At sunset in picturesque Highlands' Steak House at the Mall of Asia, Fr. Mario Sobrejuanite celebrated mass. In his homily he said that in Korea, people celebrate birthdays only twice: the first year, to mark the beginning of life, and the 60th, in thanksgiving for the fullness of it! And that we exactly did on the evening of July 3. We celebrated life!

My sister Babot declared to the world that her husband was an old man, and this was not done subtly as she made my brother-in-law's senior citizen ID card his invitation. Having spared nothing, she made sure we feasted on no less than Highland specialties of assorted Tagaytay greens with condiments and dressings; clam chowder; prime rib; salmon fillets with saffron cream sauce; chicken parmigiana; bourbon baby back ribs; fettucine alfredo; assorted garden vegetables with toasted garlic; corn on the cob; mashed potatoes; decadent chocolate cake; cheesecake; tropical fruit with wine to match that flowed from happy hour to past midnight!

The food was a treat by itself but the evening was made even more delightful by Art Manuntag, the Tony Bennett of the Philippines, and UP Conservatory of Music's soprano Alexis Edralin, whose voices filled the air with song!

It was a night to remember. The food was good, the entertainment glorious and the ambiance sublime! Perhaps, it was being in a log cabin with the hues of dusk upon the bay and the lingering scent of pine in the company of family and friends that made it even more magical!

Manong Babes, Bill, George or Hassanal you're definitely not! But know that you are loved just the same! And may all the blessings that befall the earth be yours, this year and always!

Highlands Steak House is at 2/F, Entertainment Center, Mall of Asia (tel. 5560769).

Although I'm in Kuwait working in one of the companies here, I don't fail to read your column every Thursday. Thanks to the e-mail we are able to keep in touch with you out there.

Now I have a problem that I hope you can solve for me. One of my expatriate friends loves onion soup and I would like to surprise her with one that I've made myself. Would you be kind enough to teach me how to do it and is it a simple task? She's all praises for an Indian dish that one of our friends prepared for her. I'd like to give her a big surprise by making this onion soup for her.

ANGIE MAGBANUA

Hello, Angie. The key to onion soup is how well your stock is made, which is beef in this case. The whole secret to it is just that. So no canned stock or bullion cube will ever suffice for the real thing. Here's your recipe:

French Onion Soup

2 tbsp butter
2 tbsp olive oil
1 k beef shank
2 c white wine
12 c water
Bunch of parsley with stem
1 stalk celery with leaves
1 unpeeled carrot, scrubbed
2 onions
1 tsp salt
1 tsp whole peppercorns

In a saucepan, heat oil and butter. Sear beef shank and add in the rest of the ingredients.

Simmer over low heat for 3-4 hours. Add more water if you must. At the end of the simmering process, you must have approximately 6-7 cups of stock that is a dark, rich brown and has a wonderful beefy flavor.

An alternative that comes out excellently as well is baking the whole mixture for 6 hours at 300 degrees after searing the beef. With the amount of electricity you will use up, rest assured that the stock will be excellent!

Make this a day before making your soup. This way, you can chill the mixture and scrape off the fat from the stock.

On the day itself, after de-fatting your stock, bring this to one boil and strain. Save the stock and continue with the following instructions:

1/3 c butter
1 ½ k onions, sliced thin
¼ c chopped garlic
2 tsp Dijon mustard
1 c white wine, optional, but better with stock

Melt butter in a pan. Add onions, and caramelize. This process will take about 20-30 minutes. Caramelize meaning a nice golden color and not burnt!

Add the garlic and the mustard. Add wine and let reduce.

Add the beef stock. Simmer over low heat for 30-45 minutes.

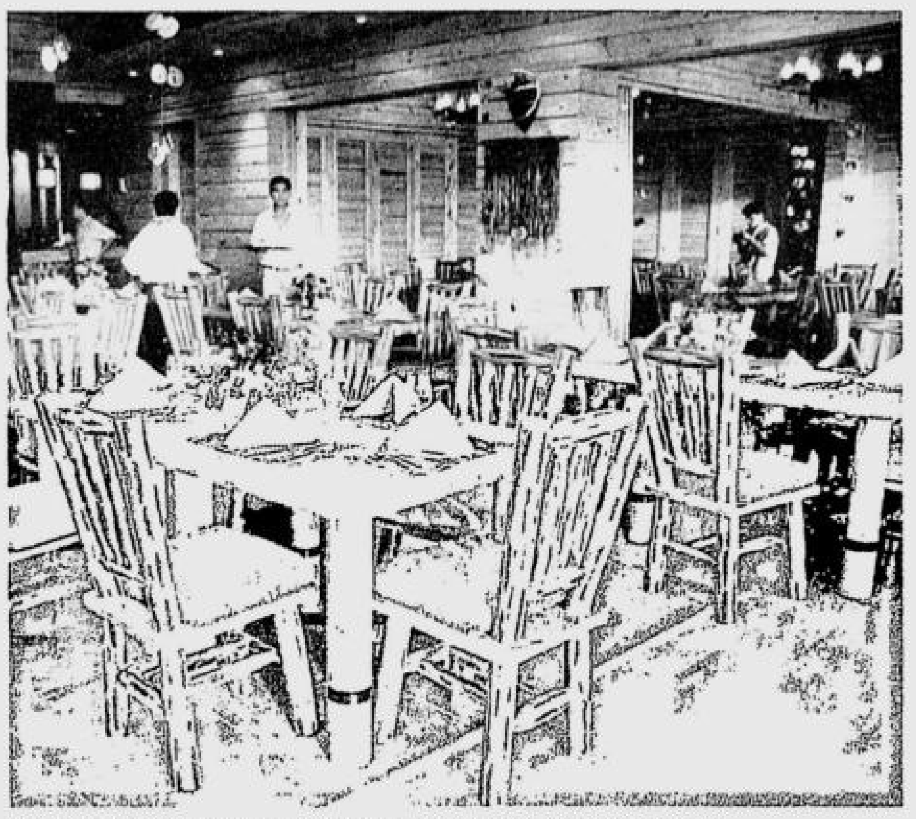
Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Ladle the mixture into individual consomme cups. Prepare baguette (French bread) by slicing it ½-inch thick, diagonally, spread butter on bread.

Lay 2 pieces of baguette over soup and top generously with grated cheeses: mozzarella, emmenthal, gruyere and/or parmigiano.

Sprinkle chopped parsley and season with coarsely ground pepper. Arrange on a tray and just before serving, bake in a 400-degree pre-heated oven until golden and cheese has melted.

E-mail the author at raspiras@inquirer.com.ph



THE TAGAYTAY Highlands' Steak House now at the Mall of Asia

Leftover food can help feed the hungry

By Linda B. Bolido

THE CONSUMER

READER MARIZ CUBELO HAS A QUESTION for restaurants, bakeshops and other food establishments. What do they do with leftover food at the end of the day?

I know what some food court stalls in shopping malls do before closing time: They sell what is left of that day's menu at discounted rates, as much as 50 percent. You will know where such "sales" are going on by the queues in front of those establishments. Many people who live nearby or who happen to be in a mall around closing time often stop by their favorite food stalls or bakeries to buy items at discounted prices.

As to what the others do, I have no idea.

Cubelo is asking not just out of idle curiosity. She feels concerned that so much food may be going to the waste bin at the end of the day. She suggests that, instead of throwing away leftover foods (which are still good and edible), food establishments should give them away to some charitable organizations or volunteers who are willing to collect them for distribution to those in need of food.

"This practice is being done in most western countries like the United States, Canada, Australia... some volunteers, who usually have 'soup kitchens' (feeding centers), pick up these leftovers and [use] them to feed the homeless," she says.

Cubelo hopes the practice can be adopted here so hungry people, especially malnourished kids, can have decent meals every now and then.

Speaking of malnutrition, there is an e-mail that is circulating about the danger of eating too much instant noodles. The message alleges that the wax coating used to prevent instant noodles from sticking together may cause cancer. It says people should make sure they eat instant noodles only once every three or four days to be on the safe side.

I don't know if there is some scientific basis for that claim. What I do know is, despite efforts to add some micronutrients to some instant noodles, they still do not provide sufficient nourishment for people, especially growing kids. It can never substitute for a balanced meal with protein sources, carbohydrates, vegetables and fruits.

Most instant noodles in the market contain a lot of salt and *vetsin* or monosodium glutamate for flavor.

But such is the state of the Filipinos' finances that even rice has become a luxury. So they send off children to school on a breakfast of instant noodles and workers have noodles for *merienda* and lunch. In many homes, noodles have also substituted for viand, eaten along with rice.

Receipts

The Bureau of Internal Revenue is conducting once again its raffle wherein entries are official receipts from establishments. Winners receive cash prizes, I think as much as P1 million. But how can you join if you cannot get an official receipt even if you demand it?

Such was the experience of Irene Tanzo who said, in at least two establishments, she had to practically beg to be issued receipts. In one establishment in Nueva Ecija, her insistence got her a receipt but it was not under the name of the store.

In a refreshment kiosk in Los Baños, Laguna, on the other hand, "they were offering me a sales order slip. When I demanded an official receipt, they got a page from their O.R. (official receipt) booklet and tried to fill it up. I told them that they should use carbon paper so they would have a record of the transaction, but the staff said they ran out of carbon paper...

"Both stores have the BIR sign 'Demand for a receipt' posted [on their walls]."

Feedback

From tito.basa@gmail.com, "Count me in if you need support [in getting those taxi meters installed] in full view (July 13 column)... I recently encountered a driver who turned off the meter and charged us P100 not knowing I already saw [the fare]..."

Basa wondered what happens to reports sent by text message to the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB). He said he sent them a text message to report a taxi meter that was trying to break the world speed record, but had no idea if his complaint was acted upon. "I really don't know if they (LTFRB) really act on things like this. I [have sent them so many text messages]..."

(Our regular columnist, Marietta V. Giron, is indisposed. Please send letters to The Consumer, Lifestyle Section, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Mascardo and Yague Sts., Makati City; PO Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office, 1263 Makati; or e-mail lbolido@inquirer.com.ph —Editor)

DINING OUT

Light entrées for women are in

OUTBACK RESTAURANT HAS INTRODUCED new dishes designed to appeal specially to women. The new women-friendly entrées include Botany Bay Marsala (fresh grouper seasoned and pan-fried with mushrooms, spinach and Marsala wine sauce; served with chef's vegetables and rice pilaf) and Shrimp and Grouper Fra Diablo (sautéed grouper fillet and shrimp with pine nuts, spinach in a creamy tomato sauce, served with chef's vegetables and rice pilaf). The menu carries popular Outback dishes—North Atlantic Salmon (lightly seasoned and grilled with Outback's remoulade sauce) and Darling Point Crab Cakes (four golden cakes loaded with lump crabmeat, topped with lightly seasoned fresh tomato basil), fish and seafood, chicken, pasta and other Down Under favorites. Outback Restaurant has branches at Glorietta 4, Alabang Town Center and Libis, Quezon City.

LUK YUEN Noodle House celebrates its 25th anniversary by offering loyal diners a set of eight fortune coupons for big discounts and savings on July 21-Sept. 15. The coupon offers P35 savings (1 free iced tea) with 1 order of beef brisket rice toppings; P50 savings (free 1 order of sesame balls) with 1 order of braised e-fu noodles with seafood; P35 savings (free single scoop of ice cream) with every large order of pihng pihng tien tien (sweet & cold halo-halo); P25 savings with 1 order of pork *siomai*, *asado siopao* and iced tea for only P145; 10-percent discount on minimum food bill of P250; P25 savings with 1 order of halo-halo *congee*, radish cake and iced tea for only P175; 50 percent on the second order of any fresh fruit shake; and P25 savings with 1 order of wanton noodle soup, *asado siopao* and iced tea for only P175. Luk Yuen has outlets in Glorietta 2 (8671394), Cash & Carry (8432061), Greenhills (7212620), SM Megamall (6331610). Magallanes (8537600) and Alabang (7723028).

BOTANY Bay Marsala, one of many popular Outback dishes

C2 CLASSIC CUISINE Merienda Special offers the "Black and White Champorado" for those wanting a hot snack during the rainy season. Chef Oliver Gascon said the C2 complemented the traditional dark chocolate concoction with a white chocolate porridge. Priced at P120, it is served with crispy *danggit* and *tuyo*, and evaporated milk. C2 has also given a new twist to another favorite *merienda*, the *ginataang halo-halo*. The restaurant's version is topped with crispy *wonton* wrappers, in addition to coconut-stewed *kamote* and banana cubes, mini sago and sweetened *langka*. It costs P95 and is served with *pinipig*. The Ensaymada French Toast is *ensaymada* with lemon grass syrup. It costs P100. For a heartier *merienda*, C2 offers the Fisherman's Friend, crisp, dried fish served with garlic rice, fried egg and vegetable relish for P140. C2's Pancit-Pancitan uses stir-fried potato and *pancit* canton, with pork loin strips. It is garnished with *kinchay*, *tinapa* flakes and vegetables. Also available is Dinuguan at Puto. The Merienda Special is available 2-6 p.m. daily until Aug. 31. C2 Classic Cuisine is at 6/L, Shangri-La Mall, Mandaluyong City. Call 6361510/1509.

THERE'S more to hot noodles at Luk Yuen.

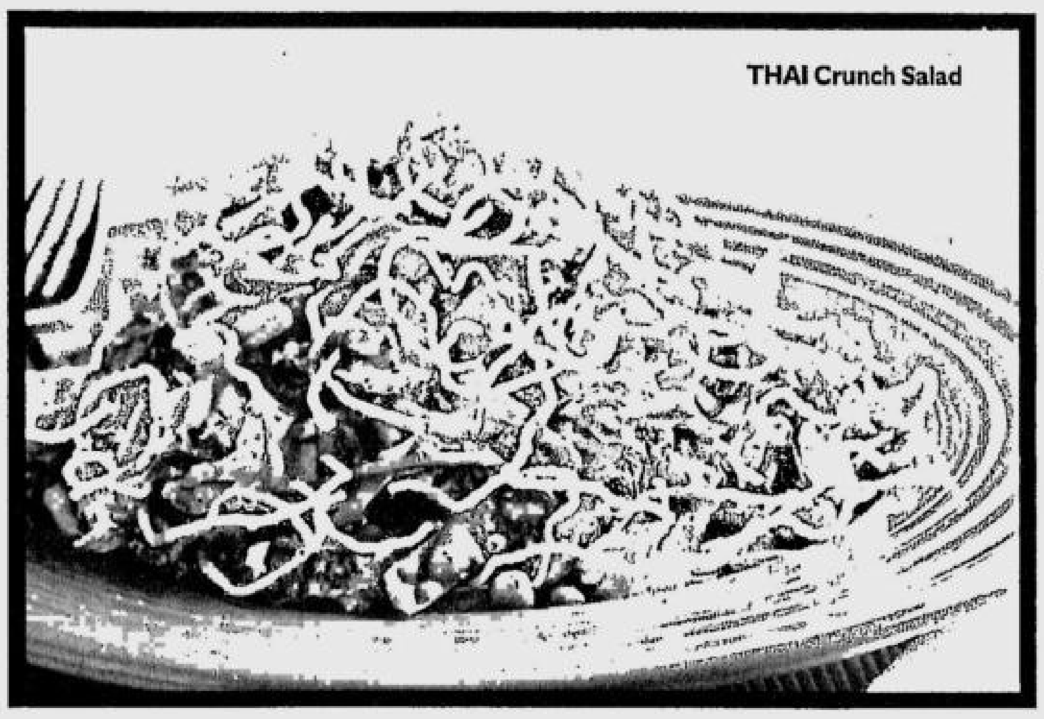
KIMPURA offers 20-percent discount on its sushi and sashimi selections. Enjoy the restaurant's various choices of sashimi and sushi combinations—nigiri sushi, makimono and temaki. Kimpura has outlets at 2/L Glorietta 2, Ayala Center, Makati (8932307/8924456) and Greenhills Shopping Center, San Juan (7218816 or 7218869).

TWIST in Eastwood Citywalk 1 offers buffet for only P275+ per person. The buffet includes salads and appetizers, desserts and more than 25 Filipino dishes like *adobo*, *lechon kawali*, *pochero*, *caldereta* and *dinuguan*. Lunch buffet is available Monday-Friday, dinner buffet Monday-Thursday. Call 4211822 to 23.

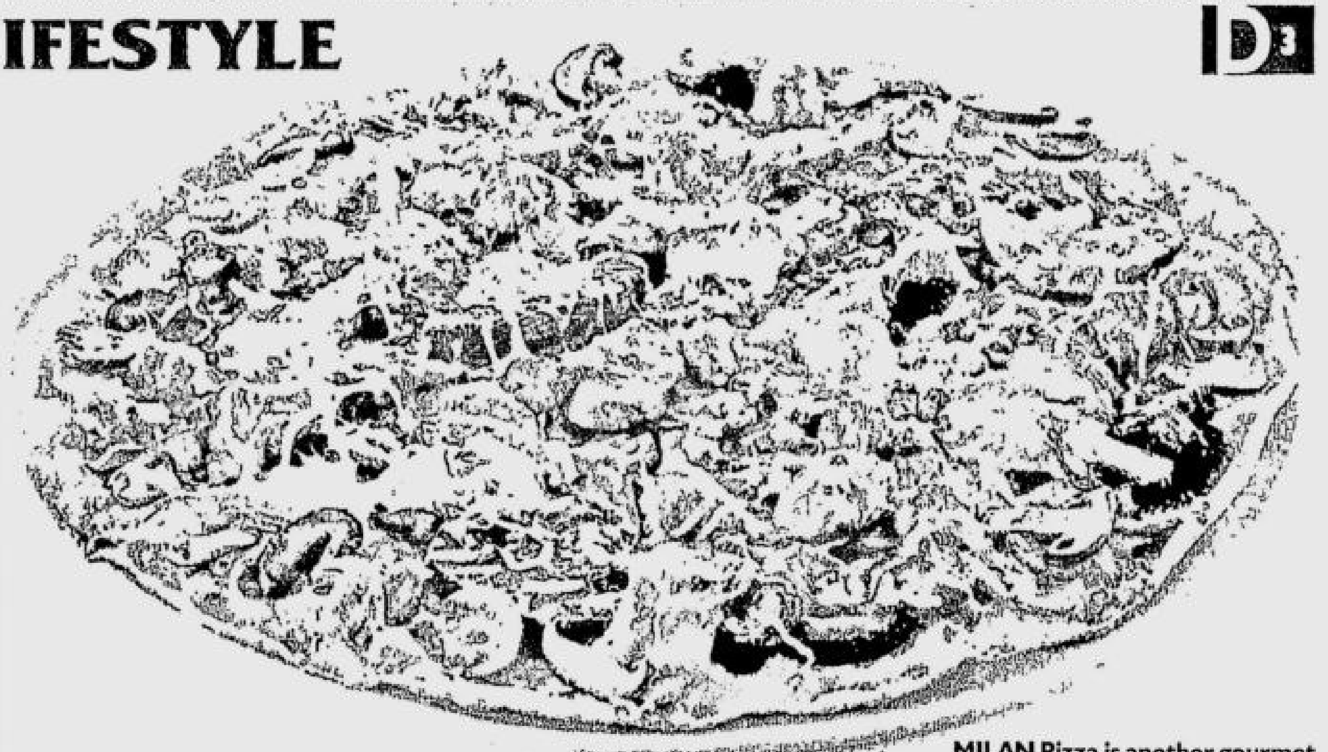
PAN PACIFIC MANILA offers international dishes and Japanese specialties like Una-don, Katsu-don, Hiyashi, Chuka, Futomaki Roll, California Roll, Pork Ginger Set and Croquette Set, available daily 10 a.m.-12 noon and 6-10 p.m. Pan Pacific Manila is at M. Adriatico corner Gen. Malvar St., Malate, Manila. Call 5360788.

SUPER BOWL of China offers its new set menus—an array of noodles, main dishes, dim sum, soup and desserts. Set A (4-6 persons) priced at P980, includes Soup of the Day, Pork Siomai, Onion Chicken Shanghai Style, Sautéed Mixed Vegetables, Shanghai Noodles and Sesame Balls. Set B (8-10 persons) at P1,880, includes Soup of the Day, Chicken Feet, BBQ Pork Siopao, Sweet and Sour Pork, Fish Fillet Taosi, Baguio Beans with Minced Pork, Lemon Chicken, Shanghai Noodles and a Fresh Fruit Platter. Set C (10-12 persons) at P2,480, consisting of Soup of the Day, Chicken Feet, Pork Siomai, BBQ Pork Siopao, BBQ Pork Asado, Lemon Chicken, Sweet and Sour Pork, Hunan Beef, Eggplant with Minced Pork Hot and Spicy, Birthday Noodles (Super Serving) and a Fresh Fruit Platter. All set menus include all-you-can-eat Garlic Fried Rice. The set menus are valid for dine-in transactions only. Super Bowl of China Restaurant also offers delivery services, call hotline 7378888.

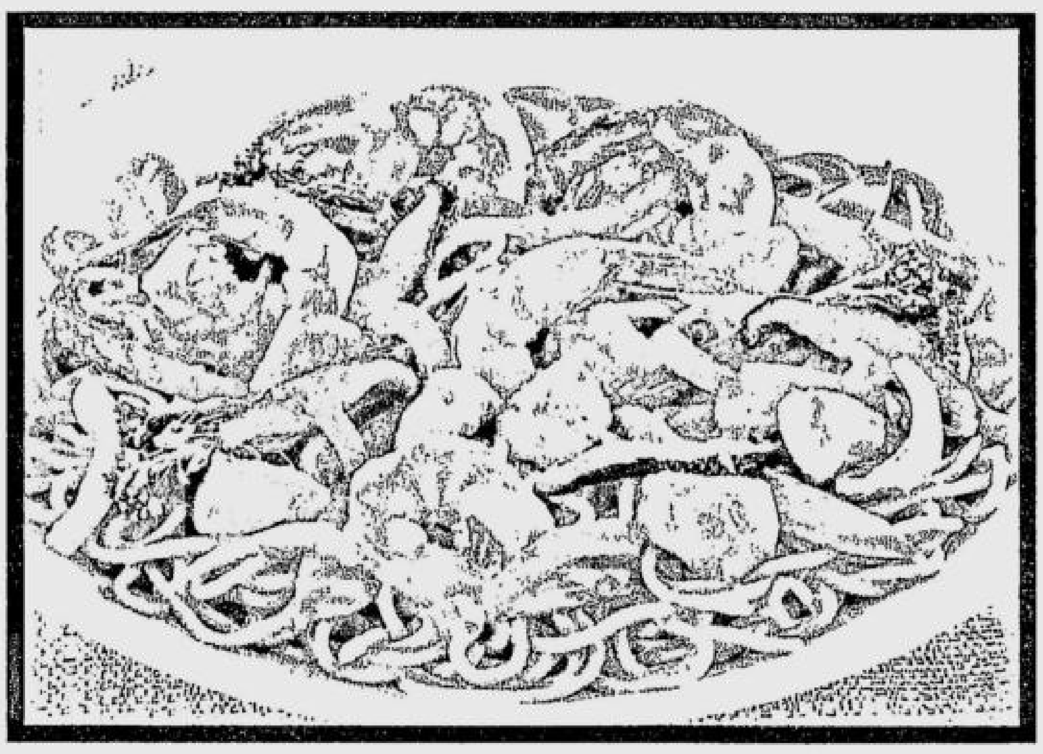
DIAMOND Hotel's Restaurant Le Bellevue offers the salmon-oyster-prawn special, an addition to its extensive a la carte menu. Diners can choose from seven seafood combinations. Choices include Roasted Prawns, Broiled Salmon Tournedos combined with Grilled Oysters and Crispy Bacon on Creamy Leek-saffron Ragout, Oyster Brushetta served with Gratin of Prawns and Vegetable Pearls, Baked Prawns Butterfly with a Salmon Soufflé served with Mushrooms Risotto and Steamed Asparagus, Broiled Mixed Grill with Salmon Mignon, Prawn, Lambchop and Pork Sparerib with Barbecue Sauce. The restaurant also offers set menus inclusive of soup, appetizer, main course and dessert. Call 5283000.



THAI Crunch Salad



MILAN Pizza is another gourmet pizza with a mix of grilled Italian sausage, sweet wild mushrooms, caramelized onions, fontina, and mozzarella cheeses. It's topped with fresh basil and Parmesan cheese.



SHANGHAI Garlic Noodles

Guess who came with dinner

From page D1

Orange Chicken Lettuce Wraps. In the filling are cubes of chicken seared in a wok with shiitake mushrooms, water chestnuts, carrots and green onions. The wraps are served on a bed of crispy rice noodles with a side of Szechuan orange sauce.

Perhaps because they were so yummy, not to mention easy to grab, the Avocado Club Eggrolls went very fast. Chunks of fresh avocado, chicken, tomato, Monterey Jack Cheese, applewood smoked bacon were all wrapped into a crispy wonton roll. With ranchito sauce and herb ranch dressing, they were delicious.

Then for those in the mood for something hot and spicy, the CPK gang brought Chipotle Chicken Pizza, a combination of chicken and fire-roasted mild chilies, chipotle sauce, mozzarella and enchilado cheeses and topped with roasted corn and black bean salsa, cilantro and lime cream sauce.

The health-conscious (and their tribe is increasing, mind you) went for the Thai Crunch Salad, which had shredded Napa cabbage, chilled grilled Chicken breast, julienne cucumbers, edamame, crispy wontons, peanuts, cilantro, julienne carrots, red cabbage and scallions— tossed with a lime-cilantro dressing.

You're jealous, we know, because Archie cannot visit your offices and talk to you about CPK's new menu. But if you go to any CPK branch, there's a chance he might be there. We've spotted him at the Shangri-La Mall branch a few times.

CPK has other branches in Glorietta 3, Ayala Center Makati; Corte de las Palmas, Alabang Town Center; Belaggio Square, Tomas Morato; and Promenade Greenhills.

Vangie Baga-Reyes

Quest for the best bartender

TGIFRIDAY'S PRESENTS the 11th annual "Shake, Rattle and Pour" Bartending Championship on July 27 at TGIFriday's Glorietta 4, Ayala Mall, Makati City.

The best bartenders from the five T.G.I.Friday's-Philippines branches will again gather to display their bartending skills.

This year's set of contenders are Jesus "Slush" Peralta (Sta. Lucia), Arnold "Fireman" Santos (Malate), John "Hawaiian Rocker" Borromeo (QC), Mervin "Heartbreaker" Ileto (Alabang), and Frederic "El Terrible" Martinez (Glorietta).

The winner will represent the country in the regional tilt to be held in Australia in October.

TGIFriday's original Bartender Championship is an annual comprehensive skill test based on two segments—Compulsory and Freestyle. The Compulsory category tests the contestants for mastery of mechanics, including knowledge and accuracy. In the Freestyle phase, they will treat guests to exciting bar routines such as bottle-flipping and drink-tossing, designed to exhibit their style, performance, guest interaction and working flair.

TGI Friday's 2006 Bartender Championship contenders: Jesus "Slush" Peralta (Sta. Lucia); Arnold "Fireman" Santos (Malate); Mervin "Heartbreaker" Ileto (Alabang); Frederic "El Terrible" Martinez (Glorietta); and John "Hawaiian Rocker" Borromeo (QC)

Ronald "Wonder Boy" Valencia of Friday's Philippines is the only Filipino bartender who has won the Asian Bartending Championship and placed second in the World Bartending Championship in Dallas, Texas, in 1999.

Last year's king of the bar Jojo "Vanilla Ice" Almanza, meanwhile, did not only top the Compulsory Test Drinks Exam but also won first runner-up honors in the Regional Bartender Championship in Taiwan. He then represented the Philippines at the "TGIFriday's World Bartending Championship" at the Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas, Nevada, USA.

Top chefs in culinary contest

THE COUNTRY'S TOP CHEFS TOOK part in the "Ultimate Fighting Cooks: LG Electronics Grand Picnic Cookout," recently at the World Trade Center in Pasay City.

Presented by Cook, the culinary lifestyle magazine of the Philippine Graphic Publications, together with the International Food Exhibition (Ifex), the event featured three teams of award-winning cooks showcasing their culinary masterpieces.

Team Jegs, which won the top prize, wowed the judges with its sumptuous dishes and impressive food presentation. Leading the team was Jeffrey Catral from the Center for Culinary Arts; members included Edward Tiozon of Tagaytay Highlands and Grace Malig of the Technical Education and Skills Development.

Winning the second place was Team Hemsley Hawks led by Aurelio Alva, a retired chef of Roosevelt Hotel in Manhattan, New York and Hilton Corporation. Completing the team were Mark Gil Guevarra of the International School for Hotel and Restaurant Management and pastry chef Connie Condeno from Dusit Hotel.

Team Jewel of Cavite bagged the third place. The group was headed by Larry Celeridad, the executive chef and owner of Future Culinary Arts. Members included Aileen Cariño and bartender Frederick de Borja, both of the FCA.

Special awards were also given out. Team Hemsley Hawks won the Sapporo Sotanghon Award-Winning Recipe, Love My Honey Best Dessert, and Nutrilicious Best Picnic Drink.

Team Jegs bagged the Deli Fresh Best Sausage Recipe.

Alba won the Ansell Gloves Cleanest Hands and the Philbest Dolly Tuna Liveliest Chef.

The Rubbermaid's Ultimate Toughest Chef was awarded to Catral.

Pancakes
Regular
French Toast & Omelette
Big

All-day breakfasts

SEATTLE'S BEST COFFEE offers all-day Power Breakfasts. Three pancakes may be served plain or with sausage or bacon sidings, all topped with syrup. Price starts at P98.

The French Toast and Omelette sets are available in three variants—herbed omelette, ham and cheese, and sausage and mushroom, for only P128.

Regular Breakfast combos composed of two fried eggs, wheat bread, fruit marmalade, and a choice of bacon strips, sautéed corned beef or cocktail sausages are available for P135 each.

The Big Breakfast consists of two fried eggs, pancakes, wheat bread, fruit marmalade, bacon strips, and a choice of sautéed corned beef, cocktail sausages, or a juicy schublig Swiss sausage. Price starts at P190.

All breakfast sets come with an 8-oz Seattle's Best coffee. They are initially available at Tomas Morato Avenue, Filinvest Mall and Caltex South Luzon Expressway outlets.

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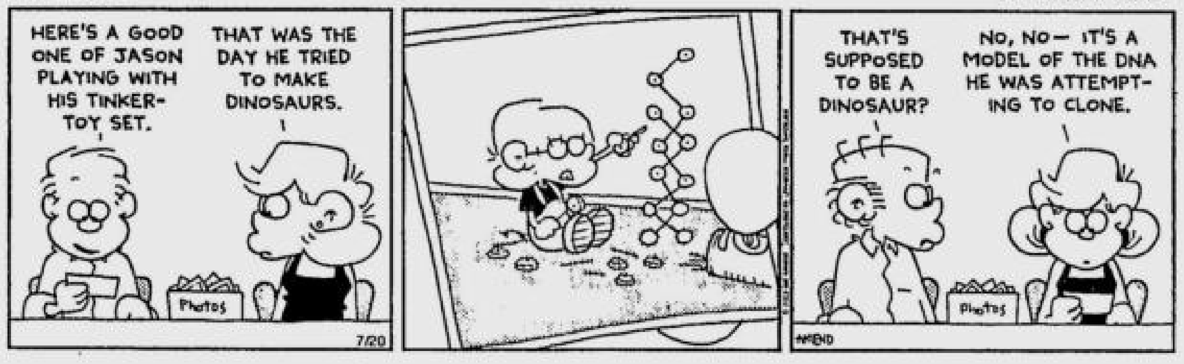
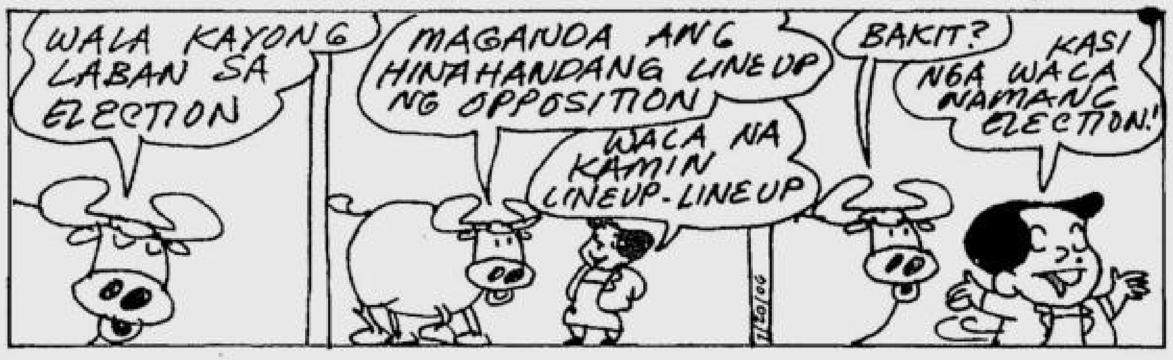
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


HERE'S A GOOD ONE OF JASON PLAYING WITH HIS TINKER-TOY SET.
THAT WAS THE DAY HE TRIED TO MAKE DINOSAURS.
Photos
7/20
THAT'S SUPPOSED TO BE A DINOSAUR?
NO, NO— IT'S A MODEL OF THE DNA HE WAS ATTEMPTING TO CLONE.
Photos
AMEND

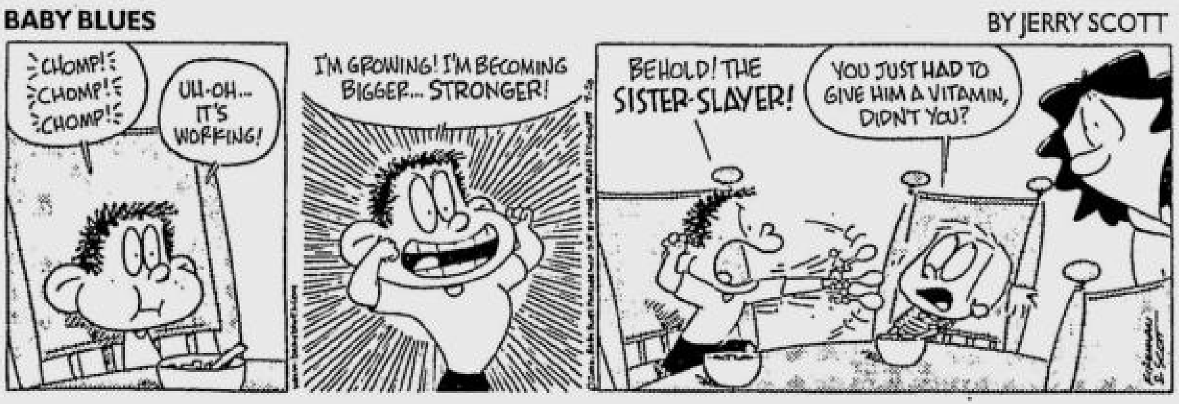
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


WALA KAYONG LABAN SA ELECTION
MAGANDA ANG HINAHANDANG LINEUP NG OPPOSITION
WALA NA KAMIN LINEUP-LINEUP
BAKIT?
KASI NGA WALA NAMANG ELECTION!

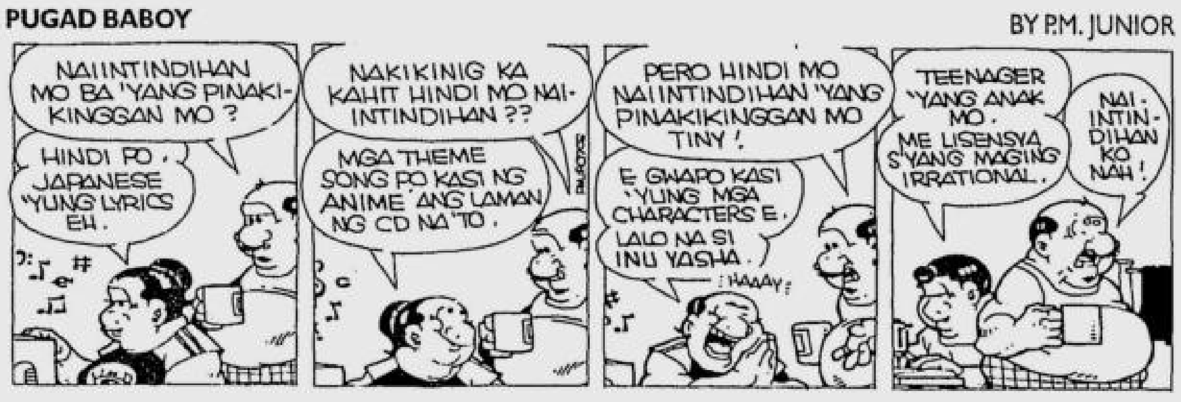
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


CHOMP! CHOMP! CHOMP!
UH-OH... IT'S WORKING!
I'M GROWING! I'M BECOMING BIGGER... STRONGER!
BEHOLD! THE SISTER-SLAYER!
YOU JUST HAD TO GIVE HIM A VITAMIN, DIDN'T YOU?

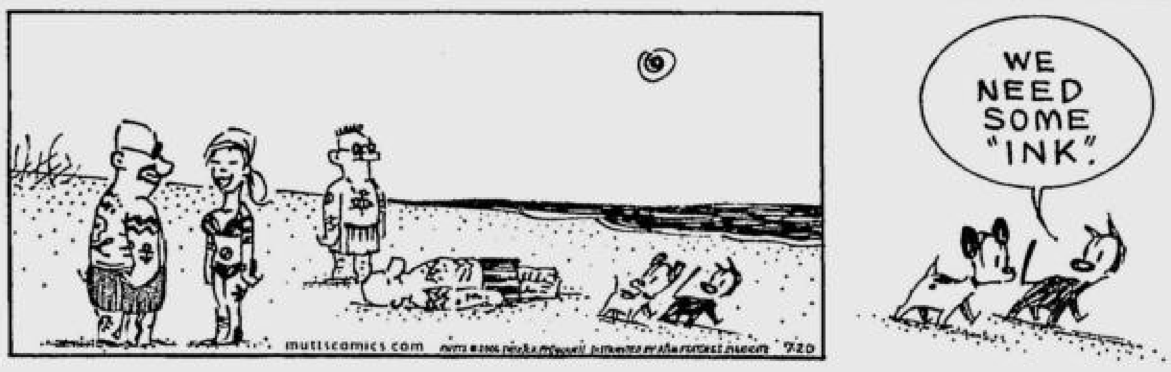
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NAIINTINDIHAN MO BA 'YANG PINAKIKINGGAN MO ?
HINDI PO. JAPANESE 'YUNG LYRICS EH.
NAKIKINIG KA KAHIT HINDI MO NAIINTINDIHAN ??
MGA THEME SONG PO KASI NG ANIME ANG LAMAN NG CD NA 'TO.
PERO HINDI MO NAIINTINDIHAN 'YANG PINAKIKINGGAN MO TINY !
E GWAPO KASI 'YUNG MGA CHARACTERS E. LALO NA SI INU YASHA.
HAAAY!
TEENAGER 'YANG ANAK MO. ME LISENSYA S'YANG MAGING IRRATIONAL.
NAI-INTIN-DIHAN KO NAH !

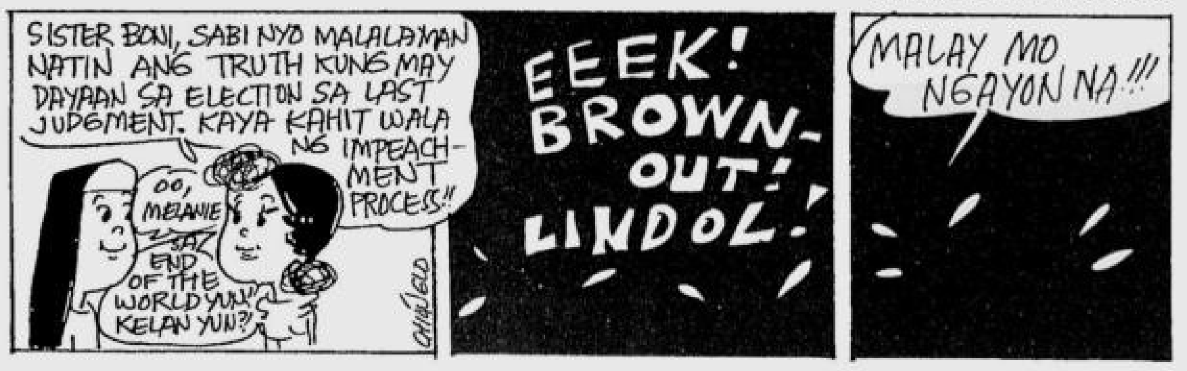
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


mutts comics.com
7/20
WE NEED SOME "INK".

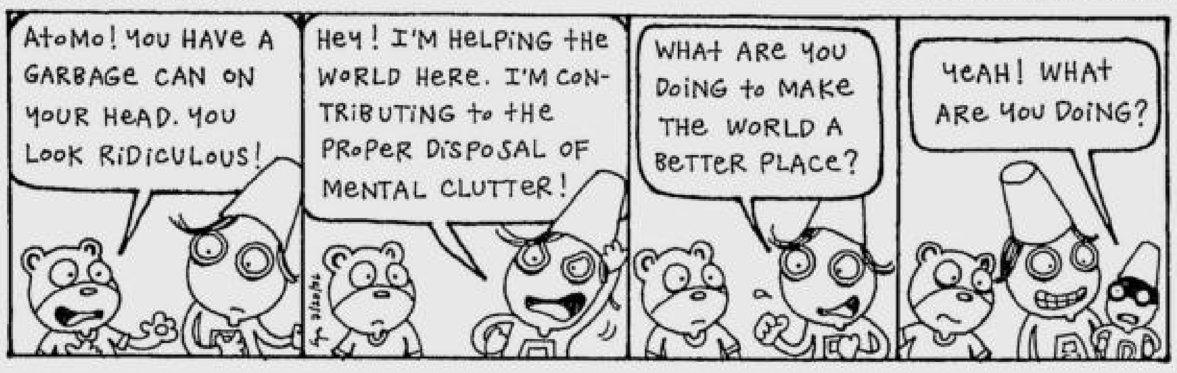
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


SISTER BONI, SABI NYO MALALAMAN NATIN ANG TRUTH KUNG MAY DAYAAN SA ELECTION SA LAST JUDGMENT. KAYA KAHIT WALA NG IMPEACHMENT PROCESS!!
OO, MELANIE
SA END OF THE WORLD YUN! KELAN YUN?!
EEEK! BROWN-OUT! LINDOL!
MALAY MO NGAYON NA!!!
CHIONGLO

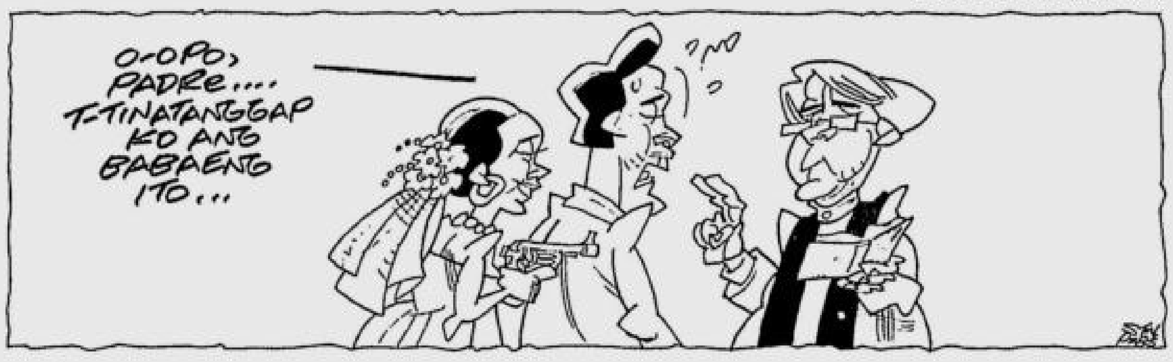
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


AtoMo! You HAVE A GARBAGE CAN ON YOUR HEAD. You Look RIDICULOUS!
Hey! I'M HELPING the WORLD HERE. I'M CONTRIBUTING to the PROPER DISPOSAL OF MENTAL CLUTTER!
WHAT ARE You DoING to MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE?
YEAH! WHAT ARE You DOING?

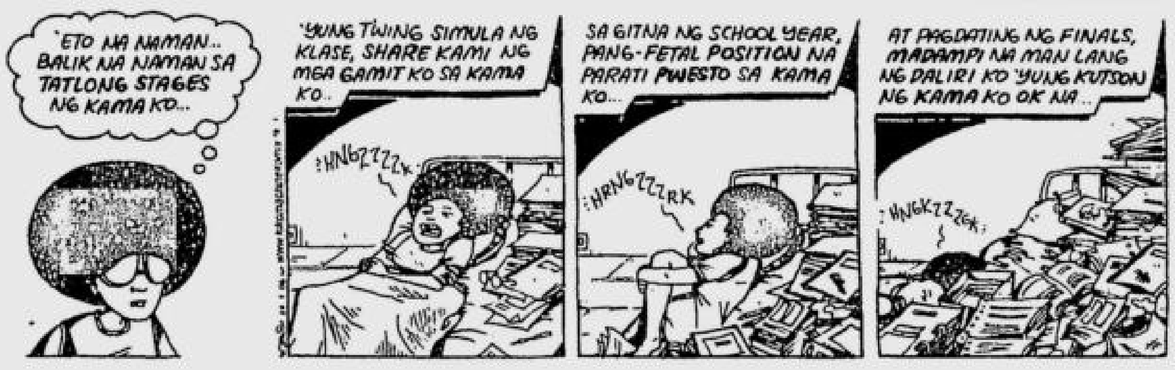
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


O-OPO, PADRE.... T-TINATANGGAP KO ANG BABAENG ITO...

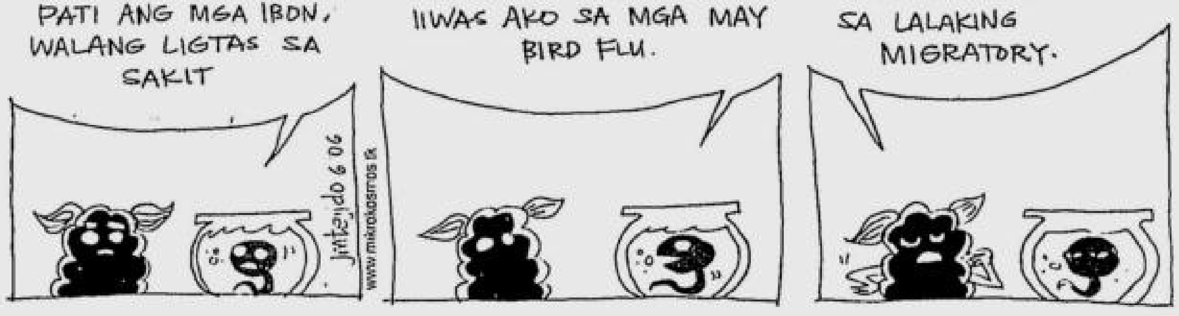
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


'ETO NA NAMAN.. BALIK NA NAMAN SA TATLONG STAGES NG KAMA KO...
'YUNG TWING SIMULA NG KLASE, SHARE KAMI NG MGA GAMIT KO SA KAMA KO..
HNGZZZZK
SA GITNA NG SCHOOL YEAR, PANG-FETAL POSITION NA PARATI PWESTO SA KAMA KO...
HRNGZZZRK
AT PAGDATING NG FINALS, MADAMPI NA MAN LANG NG DALIRI KO 'YUNG KUTSON NG KAMA KO OK NA...
HNGKZZZZK

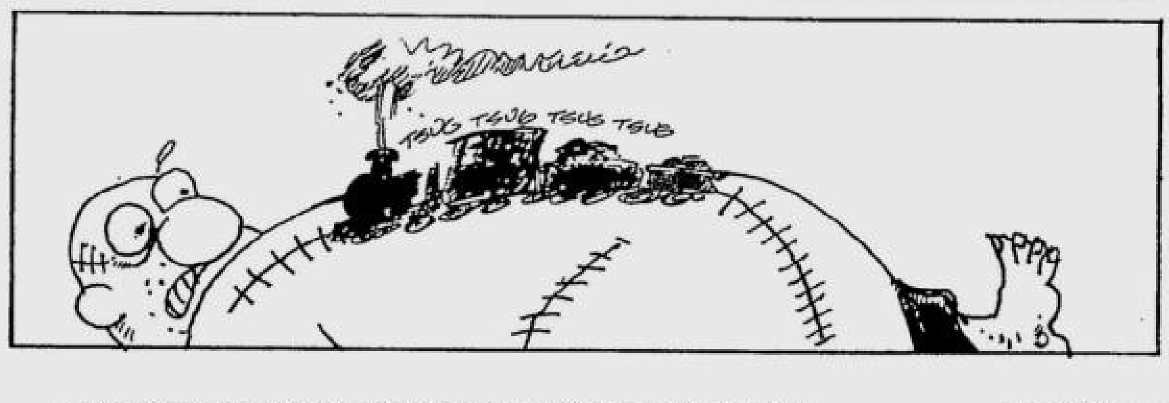
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


GRABE NA NGAYON. PATI ANG MGA IBON, WALANG LIGTAS SA SAKIT
jmtejido 6 06
www.mikrokosmos.tk
KUNG AKO, MAGING IBON, IIWAS AKO SA MGA MAY BIRD FLU.
BASTA AKO, IIWAS SA LALAKING MIGRATORY.

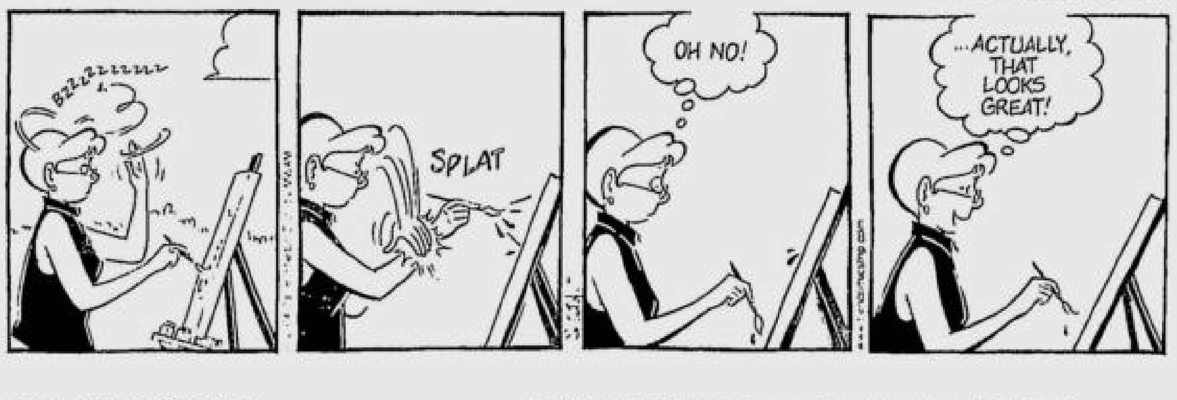
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


TSUG TSUG TSUG TSUG

BEN

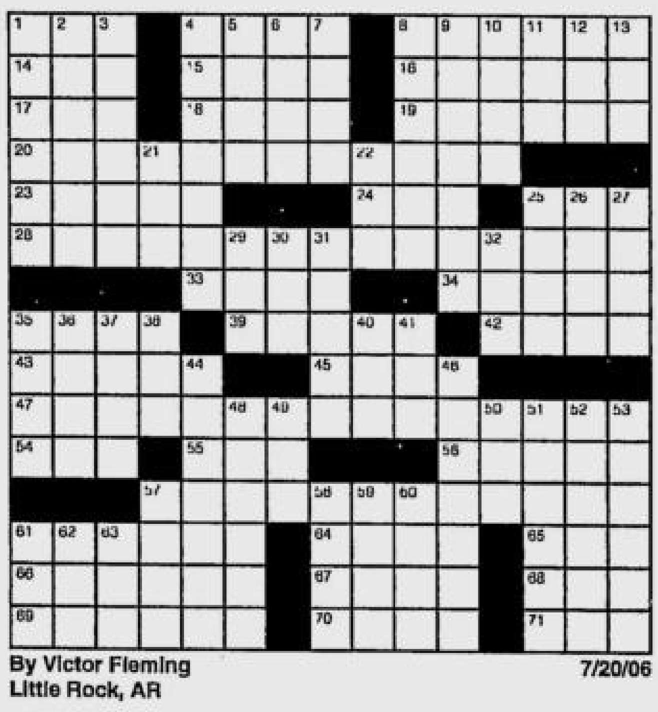
BY DANIEL SHELTON


BZZZZZZZZZ
SPLAT
OH NO!
...ACTUALLY, THAT LOOKS GREAT!

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Sault __ Marie
4 Some feds
8 Multitone harmonies
14 Barley bristle
15 "__ Lama Ding Dong" (Edsels hit)
16 Rodeo rope
17 High ball?
18 Military subdivision
19 Incarnate
20 Start of a quote
23 Horse features
24 Approx. no.
25 With 39A, source of the quote
28 Part 2 of quote
33 Appear
34 Singer Abdul
35 Indian prince
39 See 25A
42 Dessert treats
43 Cropped up
45 "Only Time" singer
47 Part 3 of quote
54 __ Juan
55 Nuptial or natal lead-in
56 One of the strings
57 End of quote
61 Dick Cheney's predecessor
64 McKinley and Lupino
65 Egg: pref.
66 Frolic
67 Likewise
68 Clucker
69 Thespians
70 Material flaw
71 Bill in the till

DOWN
1 Deli slice
2 Like beach volleyball teams
3 With all jurists participating
4 Platitudes
5 "Death in Venice" author
6 Zatopek or Jannings
7 Allied grp.
8 John of "Fawlty Towers"
9 Overact
10 Spherical bodies
11 __ Grande
12 June honoree
13 Piggery
21 Keanu in "The Matrix"
22 VFW member
25 Fancy case
26 Wicked
27 Elizabethan lament
29 Cribbage counter
30 Poetic pasture
31 Glowing coal
32 Carpet texture
35 Collegiate cheers
36 Land measure
37 Make one
38 Numbskull
40 Sailors' admin.
41 Deli bread
44 Type of penguin
46 Consultant
48 Sharon and Durant
49 Legal thing
50 "__ the wind and nothing more"
51 Holiday cheer?
52 Football team
53 Writer Gordimer
57 Freight jumper
58 Edict
59 At rest
60 Shuttle grp.
61 Old Turkish title
62 Varnish resin
63 London hrs.



By Victor Fleming
Little Rock, AR

7/20/06

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

A	G	O	G	■	S	T	A	L	E	■	T	M	A	N
T	A	C	O	■	A	R	I	A	S	■	O	O	N	A
E	S	T	A	■	M	A	N	T	A	■	P	C	T	S
S	K	A	T	E	O	N	T	H	I	N	I	C	E	■
T	E	N	■	N	S	C	■	■	■	O	C	A	L	A
S	T	E	E	D	■	E	L	B	O	W	■	S	O	B
■	■	■	L	O	D	■	E	R	N	■	P	I	P	E
W	O	R	K	W	I	T	H	O	U	T	A	N	E	T
I	V	E	S	■	R	E	A	■	S	R	A	■	■	■
S	E	T	■	O	T	E	R	I	■	O	R	A	T	E
E	R	R	O	R	■	■	■	N	A	P	■	G	I	S
■	R	I	S	K	M	A	N	A	G	E	M	E	N	T
D	U	E	S	■	O	P	E	R	A	■	I	N	G	E
D	L	V	I	■	L	E	R	O	I	■	E	D	E	R
E	E	E	E	■	D	R	O	W	N	■	S	A	S	S

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7/20/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: Your life is never boring. You're adventuresome, vibrant, dynamic and very active. You pursue everything with passion; however, at your inner core, you're in control. You thrive on change and stimulation. You like a challenge. In your old age, you want companionship. The year ahead might be one of the best years of your life. Expect a miracle.

Birthdate of: Carlos Santana, musician; Diana Rigg, actress; Natalie Wood, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You have a strong need to communicate to others today. This is a good day for negotiations, signing contracts and establishing how partnerships can work.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is a pretty solid day for business and finances. Ditto for shopping. You want to nail things down. You want some practical results.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): The Moon is in your sign today. On one hand, this can make you a bit more emotional; on the other hand, it can bring you a bit of extra good luck.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This is a positive year for you! Romance, vacations, working with children and the arts are beautifully favored. Take time out of your day today to ponder these things.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Call a friend today. Female friends in particular will be responsive to your conversation. Talk to others about your hopes and dreams for the future.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Discussions with bosses, parents and VIPs are significant today. Someone important will ask you for information, or possibly vice versa.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): This is an excellent day to make travel plans for the future. You might also try to reach someone who is far away or in another country. Long-distance communication is favored

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Today you can clearly define who owes what to whom and who owns what. Figure out where you stand with respect to shared property and your dealings with others

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You'll probably have to go more than halfway in your discussions with partners and close friends today. That's OK. It's no big deal. Just be cooperative.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Do what you can to make yourself feel more organized at work and at home today. Once you have a warm feeling in your tummy about this, you'll be more productive everywhere else in your life.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): This is definitely a flirtatious day! New love could begin for some of you. If you feel curious about someone, why not wink? What's the big deal? (Life is short.)

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Family discussions or studying, reading and writing at home will be productive today. Everybody has some bright ideas. Conversations jump from topic to topic.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

by Dave Green

8	5	2	7					
					8	9	4	
7	9	3	1		5	8	6	
	1	8	4		7	5	9	2
	6	4	5					
					1	3	5	7

Difficulty Level ★★★

7/20

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

3	9	2	8	4	5	6	1	7
1	5	7	2	6	3	4	9	8
6	8	4	7	9	1	2	5	3
4	1	9	6	2	8	3	7	5
8	2	6	3	5	7	1	4	9
5	7	3	9	1	4	8	6	2
9	3	1	5	8	6	7	2	4
7	4	5	1	3	2	9	8	6
2	6	8	4	7	9	5	3	1

Difficulty Level ★★★